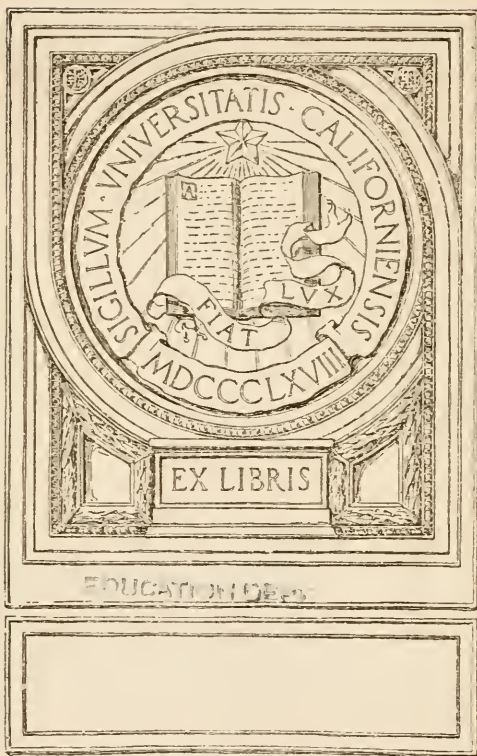
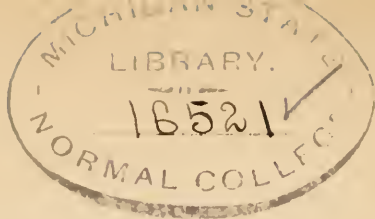


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The Republic of Childhood

KINDERGARTEN PRINCIPLES
AND PRACTICE

BY KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN
AND NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH



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THE
REPUBLIC OF CHILDHOOD

BY
KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN
AND
NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

III
*KINDERGARTEN PRINCIPLES
AND PRACTICE*

The Republic of Childhood

The Kindergarten is the free republic of childhood. — FROEBEL.

KINDERGARTEN PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

16521

BY

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

AND

NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH

My teachers are the children themselves, with all their purity, their innocence, their unconsciousness, and their irresistible claims, and I follow them like a faithful, trustful scholar.

FROEBEL.



BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON, MIFFLIN AND COMPANY
The Riverside Press, Cambridge

1896

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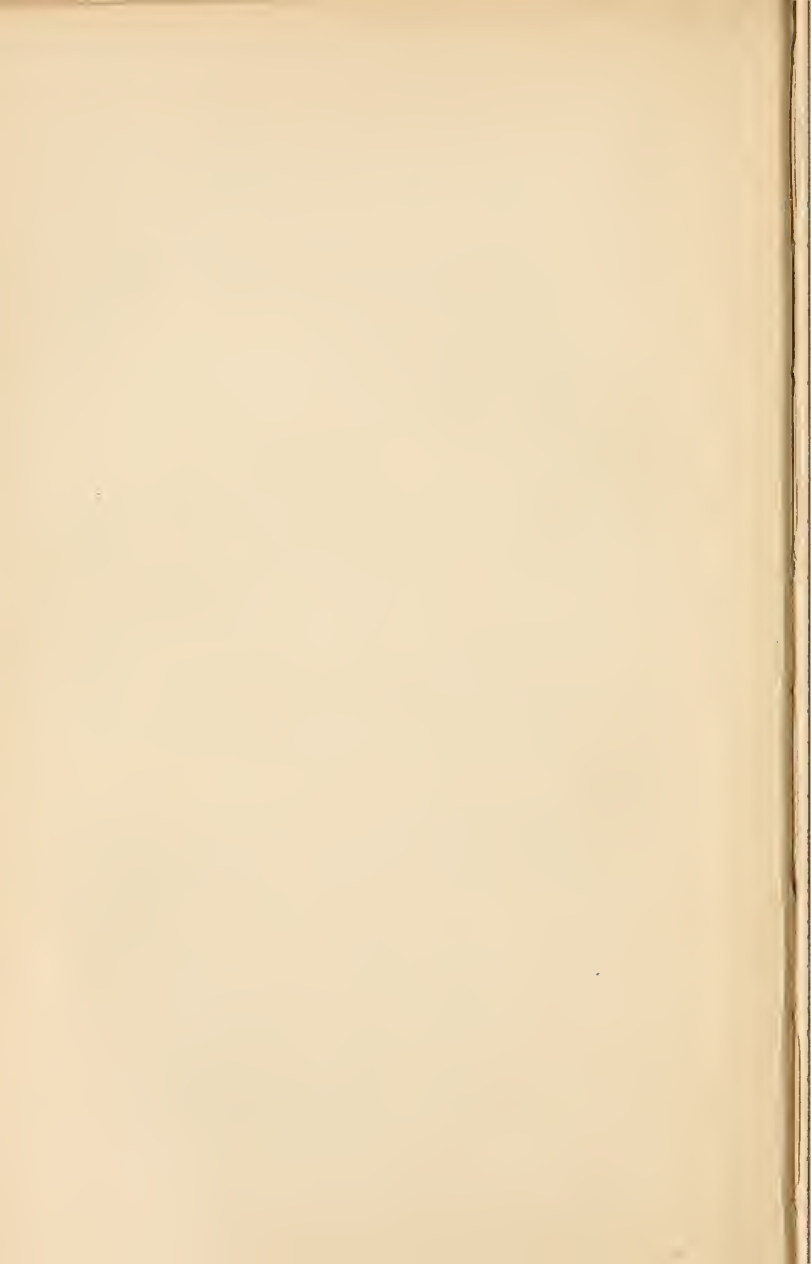
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KINDERGARTEN PRINCIPLES AND PRACTICE

THE ART AND MISSION OF THE KINDERGARTNER

“ To be a kindergartner is the perfect development of womanliness. — a working with God at the very fountain of artistic and intellectual power and moral character. It is therefore the highest finish that can be given to a woman's education to be trained for a kindergartner.” — ELIZABETH PALMER PEABODY.

AMONG the other vocations which have grown up for women in the last quarter century, none is more important, or significant of better things, than that which embraces the training and culture of childhood, for it has drawn into the channel of a scientifically learned and practiced profession the best and highest instincts of the sex.

Woman's
Relation to
Education.

Frederic Denison Maurice says: “ The zeal which has been awakened respecting infant education has been of infinite worth, for it is impossible in educating little children to think chiefly of reading, writing, and ciphering. We are compelled to remember that we have living spirits to deal with, which must, by most wonderful and

mysterious processes wherein we may be agents but cannot be principals, be brought to trust, to think, to hope, and then to know ! ”

It is difficult to see how the true position of women as regards education could ever have been mistaken for a moment. And in one sense it never has been mistaken ; for that mothers must bring up their children, to use the common expression, and that, when the mother's care fails, such “ bringing up ” must be delegated to another woman, is the most universally acknowledged fact of every-day life. But what is not so universally understood is that “ bringing up ” is another name for education ; and that education, to be effectual, must be conducted with a purpose and according to knowledge.

Appeals of
Froebel,
Rousseau,
and Pestalozzi.

Froebel cannot be said to have discovered a new fact, or even propounded a new theory, when he hailed women as the true ministers of the great work of reformation which he undertook. He only strove to give a new direction to the old activity, and to make manifest the true ground on which it should proceed. Pestalozzi, and Rousseau before him, had made public appeals to women ; but Froebel renewed them with fresh force, calling upon the mothers, wives, and maidens of the German nation to undertake their natural task, that which love and necessity equally bound upon them, but to undertake it with a wider and more distinct pur-

pose. The stress which Froebel lays upon early child-culture shows the immense value he attaches to the precious formative period of life, and explains the lofty ideal he invariably sets before the kindergartner. He seems to have descended deeper into the well of truth than any previous educator, and his insight into the value of studying childhood's earliest manifestations was the richest treasure he found there. To his honor be it said that he was not content to let the soul struggle up into unmeaning growth, but sought to train it, as he would the tendrils of a vine, into vigorous beauty and healthful fruit.

Edgar Quinet says: "Froebel saw the tree in the germ, the infinitely great in the infinitely small, the sage and great man in the cooing babe; and his method is therefore that of Nature herself, which has reference to the whole, and keeps the end in view through all the phases of development." He was the great pioneer of the modern system of child-study which seems destined to revolutionize our methods of teaching, and as such he deserves our high regard had he no other claim upon the recognition of the world.

It is at once evident that, when women are appealed to as ministers of education, it is intended that they should make education their last and highest study, and that they should acquire all the knowledge requisite for assisting mental, moral, and physical devel-

Woman's
Need of
Preparation.

opment during those years which prepare the course of future life. Women need culture, development, accomplishments, breadth of view, cultivation of the logical faculty, besides all their natural purity, patience, and devotion, to make ideal wives, mothers, and teachers, yet these vocations are commonly the only ones for which they receive no training.

Dr. Seguin writes: "If one sex needs more education (I do not say information) than the other, it is the woman; because, when the man is buying, selling, manufacturing, etc., the woman has the problem before her of educating her children. This problem," he says, "demands from woman, besides the matters of the intellectual and physiological curriculum, an extensive knowledge of hygiene, and a clear idea of the legislation, history, and philosophy of her sex and of childhood."

We have long blindly relied on the natural instinct of woman in these matters, but it is time this instinct should be trained and developed into reason. A new key has been found to unlock the nature of the child, a new alphabet is ready wherewith to decipher its secrets: will not the mothers of our day snatch gladly at this key, and eagerly study this alphabet? And will not the young women, too, who are not yet mothers, joyfully undertake the sacred duties to which Froebel calls them?

The office of educator is a woman's in the very nature of things, irrespective of whether she have children of her own or not, or of whether she takes up education as a salaried profession. Should the latter be her choice, she will have noble prototypes if she afterwards relinquishes it for marriage; for Cornelia, mother of the Gracchi, and Aurelia, mother of Augustus Cæsar, had both been governesses of other women's children before their own sons were born.

It is certain, however, that the results in child training, for which Froebel hoped so much, can only be attained if the system is interpreted according to the principles of the discoverer. Without this, his best conceptions must be falsified and turned against his aim; mechanism alone would remain, bringing back teacher and pupil into the old tracks of routine. The fact that it is so easy to counterfeit Froebel's system, or rather so difficult not to do so, without very close and discriminating study, explains the many pseudo-kindergartens we see everywhere around us,—institutions which do much to prejudice thinking people against the real thing, and which could not exist did women in general understand what a kindergarten should really be.

Need of
Special
Training
for the Kin-
dergartner.

If any young woman, therefore, is to be a wife, a mother, a teacher, a governess, a kindergartner, or none of these, but a thoroughly developed

woman and a helper in the world's work, then, in view of the nature of her responsibilities, she needs a definite and systematic training in child culture, and it is our belief that she can get this nowhere so well as in a good kindergarten training school. Can she not take up the study by herself, you say, at odd moments, and by following out a course of reading? No, dear madam, "odd moments" will not do for such a work as this, and, though a course of reading in the history and philosophy of education would be most desirable for her or for any other woman, yet it would never give her such a knowledge of the kindergarten as she could gain in a class of earnest young women united by a common aim, and guided by a teacher whose life has been spent in the working out of Froebel's principles. And, more than all this, in studying by herself she would lack the companionship of children, the opportunity to translate her theories into practice, and this part of the training is, perhaps, more valuable than any other. If, then, she desires to add this crowning glory to her education, let her work earnestly and systematically, under the best training teacher she can find.

She will then learn, first, the technique of the Froebel system; she will become measurably familiar with its every instrumentality, gifts, occupations, recreative exercises, use of stories and games. She will also begin to

What the
Kindergart-
ner must
learn.

Technique.

learn the practical management of children according to their physical, mental, and moral needs, and this will include among other things the secret of discipline, — of leading, not driving; of living with them, not for, above, beyond, or instead of them.

Practical
Management.

A happy method of thus disciplining and guiding children is no easy thing to learn; but hardly less difficult, to the ordinary person who has been educated entirely from text-books, and instructed rather than harmoniously developed, is the mastery of the art of oral teaching, and this awakens a sense of power in the teacher as fully as it develops self-reliance in the pupil. She must come before the class, not with the printed word to inspire questions and verify answers, but by force of necessity, with the subject clear and complete in her mind, ready to adapt it to the immediate needs of all. "Such teaching is an exhilarating mental gymnastic, developing observation, expertness in illustration, logical and rhetorical skill, fertility of imagination, self-command, power over one's own resources, and sympathy with one's scholars."¹

Art of Oral
Teaching.

¹ "Oral lessons! They should come from the overflowing beaker, not from the scanty cup. If mechanical, what an utter failure they become! They must be so spontaneous as to awaken an interest in every pupil; so well prepared for as to satisfy the aroused attention; so replete as to tempt and reward all mental craving; so suggestive as to start innumerable activities in the listening brain; and so forceful and inspiring as to

Oral teaching does what no other teaching can do as well, — sees the child's need as it arises, and adapts itself promptly to meet it, thus making a more vivid, real, and lasting impression. But it must be said in passing that this as well as the text-book method is in danger of falling into the "pouring-in process," and then becomes just as disastrous to the development of the child's mental powers, because it is so often sadly wanting in exactness.

Some people naturally possess this gift of oral teaching in a remarkable degree, while to others it comes only with long practice; but it certainly can be secured in fair measure by study in a Normal training class. The student must learn to "think on her feet;" to come to the right conclusion quickly; to see the child's mental need when it arises, and meet it at once; to teach what is vital and necessary, and within the child's powers, and not waste time upon mechanical iterations and useless facts; to draw from the child, not "pour into" him; to make him the discoverer of knowledge, instead of being herself an instructor. She must learn to seize upon the salient points of a subject, and throw so bright a light upon them that the blindest may read and comprehend; to drive to investigation, research, and study by every available means. They should be mixed with every recitation, — an infiltration of sunlight over every path of knowledge, shortening and illuminating the road, and yet revealing an infinite vista." — Louisa P. Hopkins, *How Shall my Child be Taught?* p. 76.

make herself interesting and charming to children; to be able to impress the same idea in more than one way, and with more than one set of terms. And for all this teaching she needs a trained voice, clear and musical, to be used with ease, natural inflections, perfect articulation and pronunciation. To be an expressive reader has long been thought a requisite of primary teaching, but, alas! that is not enough for us: with the new methods we require eloquent talkers, for "faults of tone, modulation, and manner are propagated by the teacher, as well as false syntax and incorrect pronunciation."

To do thoroughly skillful educational work, however, not only implies a mastery of the art of oral teaching, but a know-
Laws of
Mental Sci-
ence.

ledge of the laws of mental science, — of what to teach, when to teach it, and how. The student must learn to know what kind of forces she is handling, and understand how to develop them. The science of education is the science of nature and the science of man, and it is this which she is to study. It will carry her into regions of thought which perhaps she has never entered before in any previous experience of her life, even if she has acquired a great deal of book knowledge. It is the psychological part of Froebel's plan that gives it power and value, — those principles which, seen at first "through a glass darkly," unfold and grow in one's mind day by

day, until they seem to explain the universe. Only when they are fully comprehended will she see the real spirit of the system, and realize that its chief significance lies just there, and not in any cut-and-dried formalities or petty details.

And yet this is not enough. There is that stiff, unwieldy imagination and fancy with which most grown people are afflicted.

Need of Sensibility and Imagination.

Poor grown folks! we have not only lost the unwrinkled brow and dimpled cheek of childhood, but we have parted with its freshness, unconsciousness, and faith! We are very wise, it is true, but we are also blind, cautious, incredulous, dull, prosaic, and unreceptive. Children see at a glance analogies and spiritual relations which are beyond us. They really live more in the spirit and less in the body than we of a larger growth. (The kindergartner must fit herself, then, to enter the child world, — to become playmate, friend, and companion; for no woman can afford to let all the poetry and gayety of life fade away from her, even when grief threatens to eclipse the sunshine, and experience casts a shade over the full joy of living.)

To become "as one of these" little ones may be a difficult thing to learn; but if it is the only way to the kingdom of heaven, it is just as much the only way to the perfection of child gardening. It is growing to be childlike, not childish; for there is a heaven-wide difference between the two

expressions. What the kindergartner constantly strives to accomplish is to break the stiff, inflexible, outer crust, and reach the heart of things. You may call it stooping, if you choose, but in reality with every step we take down towards the child we are lifted to a higher level.

In the telling of stories, repeating bits of appropriate verse, framing of simple tales from picture-books, entering into the spirit of the symbolic games and songs of the kindergarten, — in all these things a lively imagination is needed, and a truly fresh and childlike spirit.

Nor can the student of Froebel afford ultimately to restrict herself to an understanding of the proper education of children between three and six years, Need of a Broad View and Fine Intelligence. for be assured she will neither be able to conduct nor to superintend that first teaching well unless she is also fitted to do more. "It takes much universal knowledge and wisdom," you know, "to be able to impart the right little successfully."

Every woman should certainly take an interest in the problems of heredity; she should understand the importance of prenatal influences as well as of nursery training; and, if this is necessary, should she not also be broad enough and sufficiently well informed to take an intelligent view of the higher education for which, whether properly or improperly, she is preparing every

child under her care? The fact is, no mantle of charity is huge enough to cover the clumsy educational attempts which sometimes go by the name of kindergarten. The portions of the work that are most easily learned and are of the least value, that might almost be called the tricks of the kindergarten, are those that generally most please, and are thus brought into undue prominence. There is nothing which so entirely depends for its value upon superior intelligence. If the kindergartner does not see what effect every step the child takes is to have upon its future development; if she does not clearly distinguish between entertaining him and educating him; if, in short, she has not something of a view of the entire educational field; if her work is not consciously philosophic, — it is likely to be a positive injury.

Agreeable manners and entertaining exercises and pretty games are well enough, but they must not be confounded blindly with education, unless they are lifted to it by fine intelligence. True kindergarten work is impossible without such intelligence.

All these topics which have been touched upon are important enough; but, as already noted, perhaps the most important of all, in its relation to life and growth and character-building, is the daily practice in the kindergarten itself, — studying the child

nature, and observing and practicing the varied ways of management and discipline necessary in individualizing each child. The office of the true kindergartner is one of the most delicate and exacting in the world; for though the mother herself is expected to regulate the moral and intellectual atmosphere which her children breathe, and to be the fountain of justice, wisdom, love, and sympathy to which they naturally turn, she has not always the time nor the intelligence to attend to her duties properly, and they are thus relegated to the kindergartner.

In many busy households, with their flocks of little ones, the weary mother has an endless round of duties to perform, in which too often the child, with his hourly wants, his intellectual hunger, and ceaseless questioning, is either ignorantly censured or impatiently brushed aside as troublesome. How good a thing it is, then, when he can be removed to a new little world, where he can expand morally, intellectually, and physically: where he can enjoy the society of equals, and live in the companionship of a new and charming being, who seems to him half mother and half teacher.

And thus in proportion to its vast importance is the task of the first teacher of childhood a most delicate one. A mother commonly has such an instinctive and thorough understanding of her child, if she has kept his care in her own

hands, that she knows his good possibilities, and can balance them against the evil ones better than any one else; and thus, if she be a true mother, she is her child's best educator. The teacher must learn all this theoretically before she is fit to take the mother's place, and only by learning it theoretically is she prepared to add to her knowledge by experience. But here let us say that no amount of abstract book knowledge or scientific experimenting can compensate for the lack of that subtle something which we call "maternal instinct." "One who is a mother only to her own little ones is not one of God's mothers, she is only a woman who has borne children," says George Macdonald. Learning may make a pedagogue, it will never of itself make a kindergartner. On the other hand, we can do nothing without it: it is love and learning combined which we need in our vocation, for "a loving heart is the beginning of all knowledge; this it is which opens the whole mind, and quickens every faculty to do its fit work."

There can be very little class instruction in the kindergarten: its chief weapon is personal influence, and instead of learning we aim to give life; instead of study, experience. It should never be in any sense a school, but if it reaches its ideal it becomes at last a bit of practical child-life, a community in which each tiny citizen acts out his own good will and pleas-

ure, so long as it does not interfere with the pleasure of his neighbor or with the common welfare.

We aim to make the children self-governing.

The kindergarten is a republic; the happy mistress of that republic is or should be a child among the children,

The Personality of the True Kindergarten.

merrier than the youngest, but able to guide them all. The soul of a wise and loving mother, the mind of an earnest woman, the heart of a little child, that comprehends the personality of an ideal kindergartner, — it is what, despite our limitations, we all strive to be. “The very soul of the kindergarten is the child gardener.” She must know how to guide the children watchfully and tenderly. Obedience must be hers, though it must never come from terror, but from an innocent, trustful, never-disappointed love. She should be the child’s confidant, helper, and adviser. He knows where to find sympathy if he is in trouble. He knows who will smile when he has some happiness to recount. He does her will cheerfully, because he sees that she is always calling him to new and joyful experiences, always giving him command over himself and his faculties, ever leading him to fresh victories. She seems to him a compendium of knowledge and wisdom, a playmate who knows just what he desires, a friend who never fails. He is sure of her, and she, on the other hand, is equally sure

of him, if she is mistress of her art. She moves from child to child with smiles and words of cheer, or with friendly caution and encouragement. She knows when the little hands are weary, when the tired head needs rest. If she is in sympathy with her vocation, she is the happiest woman in the community, and why should she not be so? She is surrounded with bright eyes and rosy cheeks, with loving lips and tender little hands, with merry looks and ringing laughs, or with pale faces which touch her very heart. She is helping willing fingers and busy brains to begin their bit of the world's work; and though she does not always see harmony, yet great is her joy when a glint of it begins to appear here and there.

Yes, take all the professions, singly or in a mass; take the good cheer of a physician who has saved his patient, the complacency of a lawyer who has cleared his client, the ecstasy of an artist who has wrought out his ideal, the joy of a preacher who has led a human being from error to truth, — there is nothing in any of these more beautiful or satisfying.

But in order that the kindergartner may accomplish what she strives for so earnestly, in order that she may work with intelligence and reap with certainty, deep and earnest preparation is necessary, that she may comprehend the philosophy of the system and ap-

How Success can be attained.

ply it wisely : for, unless a kindergartner is both more thoughtful and skillful than the machine teacher, it is not only evident that the system of Froebel cannot effect any great reform, but that she cannot safely be trusted with that most difficult of all tasks, the (forming of the mind) ; that of the succeeding teachers, the informing of the already partially formed mind, being a much simpler process.

“ It is useless to expect social regeneration from persons who are not themselves regenerated,” says Dr. Harris. It is one thing to teach and quite another thing to make the children love that teaching ; yet in proportion to the love engendered do the trials disappear on both sides.

Ruskin says : “ Education then, briefly, is the leading human souls to what is best, and making what is best out of them, and these two objects are always attainable together and by the same means : the training which makes men happiest in themselves, also makes them most serviceable to others.”

Now, all that has been outlined of what the kindergarten student is to learn, and the lofty ideal which she must set before her, may appear a formidable summing up of the subject, but it is not, in fact, at all exaggerated. It is possible in the ordinary course of training, and with the various degrees of preliminary culture and experience with which the student enters the class, for her

to do just this, — perfect herself in the practical management of a kindergarten, and in the entire technique of the Froebel system, and make herself mistress of the art of oral teaching, if she has some natural ability, and, if not, gain a knowledge that will in the course of a year's experience show tangible fruits.

It will be the same with the various arts of expression, — illustration, story-telling, singing, and gesture, — much depends upon talent ; but much can be developed from moderate abilities, if the student is earnest and intelligent.

Of the science and history of education, and of the laws of mental science, she will learn as much as possible in the allotted time, and the amount of time she gives will be absolutely dependent upon her receptivity. If she keeps the ear of her heart open all the time, she can listen advantageously and begin to develop almost immediately. Many things, however, must be left for future study ; in some departments of training it will be possible only to give her the key words, the foundation, trusting that she may add the superstructure in future years.

If the student accomplishes such work as has been indicated in the year, or two years, which is the ordinary length of the kindergarten course, she will have learned more than in any other similar period of her life, but she can do it all by great conscientiousness ; by recognizing the diffi-

culties before her and economizing her time ; by giving up part of her social pleasures for a season ; by working carefully and with regard to health and strength ; by accomplishing each small task in the allotted time ; by treating whatever her leader says with respect and faith until she sees a better way, but by never taking any method unquestioned ; by unremitting fidelity to all her days of work and observation (for this, after all, is the most precious part of her training) ; by punctuality and energy and sympathy ; and by doing everything required of her so well that the standard of the whole class will insensibly be raised.

No amount of private reading, study, or reflection would give the earnest young woman so complete a knowledge of the kindergarten theory and practice as this class instruction and association with others in the same field of thought and labor. Studying in common is valuable in that it aids the imagination, which in adults is apt to have lost its saliency and flexibility. It is of vast importance to freely communicate with others, and, with respectful mutual consideration, exchange experiences, impressions, and ideas, that "thus by one another's gifts we may complement our individual limitations."

Value of
Class In-
struction and
Coöperation.

The student will find, however, when her preparation is complete, that she has, after all, only grasped the "skeleton of Froebel's plan, which

is in its turn only a skeleton of God's plan of education ; it will take a lifetime to clothe it with flesh and beauty."

The idea was prevalent not so very many years ago that a kindergartner was a person too young and too ignorant for public school work, and too proud to be a seamstress or nursery governess, and so this most exacting of all professions was deemed open to those who had not the requisite education, talent, or genius for any other occupation. Now, however, we are beginning to see that all the learning, accomplishments, and graces that the human mind can compass, and the human heart blossom into, are not sufficient with which to reach the ideal of kindergarten teaching. If any young woman thinks that this is the calling where her deficiencies will show the least, and her accomplishments count for the most, she will not only be woefully mistaken, but she will narrow her work down to a paltry mechanical imitation of what should be a reality full of truth, beauty, and strength. If she have not the consciousness of genius, and must even deny herself the luxury of possessing talent, she has still a mission, and there is an opportunity, though by no royal road, for her to rise in her chosen profession.

In all our work, we must keep our eyes well on the ends, or rather the aims, the ultimate ideals, and beware of losing our efficiency in

An Ignorant
View of the
Kindergart-
ner.

exclusive attention to narrow immediate results. "Never for a moment," says Dr. Hailmann, "lose your faith in the universal ^{ultimate} ^{ideals.}

law of love, which in the world of the emotions is as unfailing and as free from exceptions as the law of gravitation in the material world. Never for a moment lose your faith in truth, which, by the same law, the mind is destined to find and follow; nor in that supreme freedom of will that knows no obstacle to the doing what head and heart have recognized as good and right. Love in the emotional, truth in the intellectual, and freedom in the ethical life constitute a spiritual trinity which you in your work should worship always." Above all things, let us aim to adhere, as steadfastly as we may be able, to the highest ideal of womanhood: for the womanhood that is lovely and pure, that aims to reach the highest and best, that keeps itself in the current of the time, recognizing its new responsibilities and added possibilities, — this is a woman's richest gift to the world, and is the flower of her fairest possibilities.

Let us remember in conclusion that "to acquire a knowledge of the mind, and of the means by which the mind may be developed, is the study of a lifetime. Let us stand before it with humility, remembering that it is the meek who inherit the earth. He alone is really learning who feels the immensity of the truth, and realizes that all he

knows or can know in this world is but as a drop in the great ocean of truth that stretches boundless and fathomless into eternity.”¹

These are but the texts that have been given ; we will write our sermons from them day by day in each other's hearts and lives, and through sweet deeds of love and motherliness, through ever new accessions of mental and spiritual strength, through the steady growth of that insight which perceives the harmony of God's universe, we will make out of the broken sounds of life a song, and out of life itself a melody.

¹ Francis W. Parker.

NATURE-STUDY

" And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying, ' Here is a story-book
Thy Father hath written for thee.

" ' Come wander with me,' she said,
' Into regions yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God.'

" And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe."

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THE opening scenes of the drama of childhood, like those of the drama of the race, should be played in a garden, with the The Child in the Garden. brooks and the winds and the fluttering leaves for orchestra, and the stage - setting an ever-changing background of verdure. In such an environment the child might develop peacefully, happily, normally, and a fine serenity pass into his temper from the strength and quietude that breathed around him. If the first book we put into our children's hands were Nature's serial

story, then indeed would the lessons set seem worth the learning, thrilled through and through as they would be with the attraction of life for life, and with the interest of young things growing, in each other. To those of us who are overwrought with the complexity of modern conditions, with the hurry and worry of life, with the friction of constantly meeting uninteresting people, — uninteresting, probably, because never really known, — to such the privacy of some high-walled garden, where one might hold sweet converse with a rose, or the depth of some woodland, with the pine-tree “waving through our thoughts,” seem at times the only things to be desired. Yet commonly we cannot leave our bricks and mortar for these dear delights; nor can we always set the child on Nature’s knee to read her story-book. We can but woo “the old nurse” to come to us now and then, and accommodate herself as best she can to our conditions, and, if our will be but strong enough, those conditions may be changed until the environment becomes a more ideal one.

No one has ever questioned, so far as we know, the desirability of nature-study in the kindergarten, though there is unlimited discussion as to what and how much shall be attempted, and as to how it shall be conducted. There comes a time, now and then, however, when one must have the courage of one’s con-

Nature-
Study in the
Kindergar-
ten.

victions, and here we boldly throw down the gauntlet (or perhaps not anything so heavy, — a silk glove or a lace mitt would do) and say that in our opinion the nature-work of the kindergarten should be chiefly centred about that form of science which naturally appeals ^{Life seeks Life.} to children, — the study of living things and their ways. We feel that the subjects of geology, crystallography, mineralogy, for instance, — even in their most elementary forms, — can never have the same interest as those of botany and zoölogy to a very little child, because the mystery of life is not in them, and because he cannot see himself reflected in their manifestations, — “a belt of mirrors round a taper’s flame.” Observe, however, that the word “chiefly” was used in the above statement of opinion, and believe that it was not employed as a loophole for safety, but as an outlet of common sense. Be- ^{Natural Phenomena not excluded.} cause we think the study of living things most appropriate for kindergarten babies, we do not, therefore, exclude all mention of the other sciences. We should still study the snowflakes as they fall, comment on the atmospheric changes, watch the steam from the kettle, the flame and the rising smoke, with the children; talk with them about the smooth pebbles they find in the brook; note the colors and the stratification of the rocks in our walks together: but all these things would be incidental,

while the study of plants and animals would be constant and systematic.

The question has been mooted of late whether the nature - study of the kindergarten should make primarily for religion or for science. To us it seems that the subject is inherently twofold, and that one division of it is no more important than the other ; in fact the two are interdependent, for the truly scientific study of nature and her manifestations must of necessity foster a truly religious and reverent spirit. Froebel, in his mystical way, expresses this conviction when he says : " The things of nature form a more beautiful ladder between heaven and earth than that seen by Jacob ; not a one-sided ladder leading in one direction, but an all-sided one leading in all directions. Not in dreams is it seen : it is permanent ; it surrounds us on all sides. It is decked with flowers, and angels with children's eyes beckon us towards it ; it is solid, resting on a floor of crystals ; the inspired singer David praises and glorifies it." ¹

The " Committee of Ten," in that portion of its well-known report devoted to nature-study in grades below the high school, states that in its judgment the objects of the work are, first, to interest the children in nature, and, second, to train and develop the faculties. The acquisition of knowledge takes the third place, the report

¹ Friedrich Froebel, *Mother-Play* (tr. by S. E. Blow), p. 17.

closing with the definitely expressed opinion: "Withal, it should be constantly borne in mind that the acquisition of facts is not the most important desideratum."¹

These quotations may not seem at first glance to support our statement that religion and science are to be cultivated equally in nature-study; but we believe that science is not the mere acquisition of facts, but rather the comprehension and understanding of truth, or, as the dictionary says, the investigation of truth for its own sake. If this definition holds good, then the nature-study of the kindergarten, as we would have it conducted, would make as much for religion as for science, and for science as much as religion.

The supreme object of the study in childhood, at least, seems to be to establish a loving communion with the visible forms of nature, and thus grow to understand the varied language which she speaks. This is enough; for scientific truth can only be discovered by long and patient study, and this must needs be based on fervent interest in the subject. This gained, love and reverence come with it, and observation, concentration, accuracy, and knowledge follow after.

Supreme
Object of
the Study.

A series of nature-studies lately published give in their suggestions to teachers a wise and rev-

¹ *Report of the Committee of Ten*, pp. 142, 158.

erent summary of the ideal way of dealing with the subject:¹ —

“Make the pictures and the descriptions and other matter teach the kind helpfulness of nature, as well as her stern refusal to help those who do not help themselves. Do not let the facts of nature obscure the truth you wish to teach, or bewilder the child by their multiplicity. (Remember, it is not the formal part of nature, but the spiritual part, you wish to teach through the forms.) Give them no more of body than shows soul, as Brown- ing says of painting.)

“In teaching these lessons thus to the children they will doubtless get ideas of nature that are too narrow and positive, but they will outgrow them as they learn more of the world and human life. (All conceptions are childish when held by children.) Our purpose is to teach only the actual facts about nature. But, as every fact is a fairy tale in the mind of the child, these facts will ‘take form and limb’ in a way that would make them untrue to us. Yet that is the only way the truth can be held by the child. If we can impress upon the child the love and faithfulness of nature, and also the way in which nature requires effort and desert, we can safely leave the reconciliation of those ideas to the later years of the pupil.”

¹ *Mother Nature's Children*, Western Unitarian Sunday-school Society, 175 Dearborn St., Chicago.

(A love of nature, however, as John Burroughs says, is never to be cultivated by "dumping a lot of bare facts on children.")

How this
Object may
be attained.

"To make it a task," he says, "there 's no good in that. Let children soak themselves in the atmosphere of nature. Don't stick it on the outside. Let them absorb it. What we want is the love of these things. If we have that, it deepens our enjoyment of life."

Fortunately, there is no shrinking or reluctance to be overcome in children in this matter. They are much more willing to "soak themselves in the atmosphere of nature" than we are to allow them. All the animals are kin to them. They seem to have little or no fear of earth-worms, caterpillars, snakes, or any of the creeping things that older people cry out against ; and they bring you a slug from the garden cradled in their pink palms, with just as much pleasure, and desire for admiration of its beauty, as it had been a rose. One always thinks at these times of the sweet child Miss Elizabeth Peabody chronicled, who stopped in her play to look at a spider, exclaiming, "Oh, what a beautiful, smiling creature !" True, they are all beautiful, smiling creatures to the children ; and we blush for the hardness, yes, the wickedness, of the mother, nurse, or teacher who would shake one of these little animals from the child's hands, and by word and look indicate disgust and repulsion. It is

Children's
Love for
Animals.

wise, of course, for fear of venomous insects, to say that all such creatures are best left out of doors, where they are far happier, and can be watched more easily, and that handling always frightens and often hurts them. This is well enough, but it is a far different thing to express horror at the sight of a harmless animal the child brings, to shrink from it, or even to kill it before his wondering and never-forgetting eyes.

Equal to the children's love for animals is their interest in leaves and shrubs, in flowers and trees, and in the life-giving earth itself, where they delight to dig and grub, to throw up mounds and make miniature gardens. "As soon, however, as any power of observation has begun to supplement the merely instinctive movements," says the Baroness von Morenholtz-Bülow, "there is awakened an impulse to till the ground, and to make use of the productive force of nature: thus the child in its play, and thus man in the earliest stages of civilization, seeks to obtain better and more plentiful nourishment."¹

It seems obvious enough then, as we have already said, that every child ought, from the ideal point of view, to grow up in the country; and the delight that city children show when they are taken back to the "great sweet mother" shows that they only half live, at best, when pent

¹ Bertha von Morenholtz-Bülow, *Child and Child Nature*, p. 31.

within four walls and noisy streets. A little prisoner of the city, who had spent one blissful month on his aunt's farm, was sent as usual to play "outdoors in the back yard" the day after he returned. It was not long before he came in, choking with sobs and drowned in tears, and, when asked the cause of his grief, gasped out, "Don't want this ou'doors; want auntie's on'-doors!"

The real thing always discontents us with the pinchbeck substitute, and be sure it is a healthy discontent, and one which will find its own remedy. The country child is blessed in that he has all that is necessary for his development, if he but be given the magic touch which shall unseal his eyes and unstop his ears to the wonders of the universe.

The kindergarten, however, commonly has the city child to deal with, and it is he who must be considered now, not his fortunate little country brother. No one who has studied Froebel thoroughly but knows of that love for flowers which was one of the strongest of his distinguishing traits. From the hazel-buds, which early in childhood, he says, opened for him, "like angels, the great God's temple of nature," to the garden from whence in later life he missed the lily, the "beautiful Christ-flower,"—all through the various festivals, when he tells us that his rooms were always garlanded

How the
Kindergar-
ten may
feed these
interests.

and decorated with blossoms, up to his dying days, the flowers cluster in and over all the pages of his writings. Two of his last recorded utterances are: "Take care of my flowers and spare my weeds;" and again, just before his gentle spirit passed away, "I love flowers, men, children, God! I love everything."

It is not surprising, then, that he so constantly and earnestly insists on gardening as Gardening. one of the most valuable occupations for children, though perhaps it may be considered surprising that his devotees, in this country at least, have done so little to carry out his wishes. Froebel desired that every kindergarten child should have a small plot of ground, which he might dig up and prepare himself, and in which he would sow the seeds and tend the plants, under the guidance of the teacher. He sees there "for the first time," says Froebel, "the fruits proceeding from his action in an organic, necessarily limited, intellectually legitimate way, — fruits which in many ways depend upon his activity, though subject to the inner laws of the powers of nature. This work gives many-sided and full satisfaction to the boy's life with nature, his questions about it, and the earnest desire to know nature which leads him repeatedly to contemplate plants and flowers for a long time, and to observe them thoughtfully. And nature also seems especially favorable to

this desire and this employment, and to especially bless them by a fortunate result.”¹

Only a small plot of ground is needed for each child, of course, and the plants, as Froebel says, “should not be rare, hard to raise, or double. They should be easily grown, common plants, such as have an abundance of leaves and flowers.” Much of the gardening may be done by the children together and for a common purpose; flowers may be raised for decoration, vegetables may be given away, peas planted for the peas-work, lentils and beans for the point-work, and in the fall the seeds may be gathered and sorted for another year.

All this is simple and delightful, and would lead naturally to the establishment of such School Gardens. school gardens as have been planned by Dr. Erasmus Schwab, and are now compulsory in some parts of Germany and Austria. In these, which are really botanical gardens, cultivated by the children under the direction of trained teachers, botany is taught, as well as those other branches of natural history which may be called “inherent to the soil,” and at certain hours all kinds of outdoor sports are played in the shade of the trees. Dr. Seguin, in his “Report on Education,” traces in his picturesque style the history of “Garden Schools,” sketches their prob-

¹ Friedrich Froebel, *Education of Man* (tr. by J. Jarvis), p. 67.

able future, and points out of what value they may become in "making the schooling of the masses more active and practical by transferring it to the open air." ¹

Botanical gardens, however, either small or great, are quite out of the reach of most city kindergartens; a foot-square plot of ground for each child, even, is an Arabian Night's dream, though it must be confessed that we do not always make the most of such resources as we have, and might, perhaps, had we Oriental patience, do a little gardening in the sand-heaps, or hard-beaten earth, that frequently surround us. But let us face the matter in its darkest aspect, and see if we cannot gratify the children's legitimate desires, even in a spot which has not one inch of ground at our disposal. The first essential is that we shall be ourselves convinced that it really is absolutely necessary for the little ones to have some opportunity to watch the processes of nature as shown in germination and growth, and not only to watch, but to assist those processes themselves. When this conviction is sown deep enough, a thousand ways of carrying it out will spring up in the mind.

Every kindergarten may have growing plants of some kind, and it should be the children's pleasure to water and tend them; every kindergarten may have window-boxes for

Gardening
in Miniature.

¹ E. Seguin, *Report on Education*, pp. 132-147.

community gardens, for there must be at least one window sunny enough for the growth and blossoming of a few seeds of the hardier kinds. Every kindergartner may fill sponges with flax-seed and hang them in the windows; may hollow out and fill with water, carrots and sweet potatoes, and suspend them by cords; may buy the charming Italian "growing vases," which need so little care; may have Chinese lilies and hyacinths in bowls and pots; may plant canary-seed in the sand-table occasionally; and if (supposition can no further go!) the room be lighted by a skylight, the children may still lay peas and other seeds on thin layers of cotton in bowls of water, and daily watch the miraculous quickening of life. There is as much matter for wonder, when you come to think of it, in the growth of a mustard-seed, as in that of a *Sequoia Gigantea*, and it is not best to disdain that least of seeds because you have no room for a grove of "big trees."

Froebel again, in all his writings, insists that the child shall be allowed the privilege of companionship with animals, and, by Care of
Animals. caring for them himself, grow to understand their needs, and be more closely bound to them by the feeling that he is their earthly Providence. "The child or boy," says Froebel,¹ "who has tended or protected an outer life, even if of a very inferior degree, is more easily led to the tendance and care

¹ *Education of Man* (tr. by J. Jarvis), p. 67.

of his own life. And the boy's desire to observe living, natural objects — beetles, butterflies, swallows — is also satisfied by the care of plants, as such creatures like to come near the plant-world."

Here, again, the country child is a blessed one, for he can see close beside him every day the gentle creatures of the barnyard and field; the colts and calves and lambs; the tender mother-hen; the birds at their nest building; the snake darting through the grass; the fish and frogs and turtles and lizards; the ants and bees and caterpillars; and, far in the woods, the "wee, brown, furry face" of the squirrel. In all these creatures he may, as Froebel says, "see his own fresh, stirring, inner life in the looking-glass of outer life, and feel how really strong it is within him."

But we cannot make the kindergarten into a farmyard, nor do we wish to place any of our brother animals in an unsuitable environment, where they would be ill at ease in mind or body. The problem, it must be confessed, presents many difficulties to a city kindergarten, but not all of them are insurmountable. Those of us who are fortunate enough to have a matron connected with our institutions may certainly have a cat and dog, and, by judicious petting and feeding, attach them to our firesides. Any one may have an aquarium, and by a little study and care persuade turtles, lizards and snails to live in it as well as fish; a cage of white mice is possible (if not fascinating); a rab-

bit-hutch might be established in the playground in suitably warm months; a dovecote is sometimes not out of the question; and why might we not borrow a hen and chickens occasionally? Canaries, of course, are always charming, though many persons feel that their value to the child is lost because they are unjustly restrained of their liberty. It would seem, however, that the child might easily see the difference between the capture and imprisonment of a wild bird, and the confinement of a canary who, with a long line of his ancestors, was born in a cage and knows no other home. It is necessary, however, with animals as with plants, that the children should tend and care for them themselves, for there is a soul-culture as well as a scientific value to the work. Miss Blow says: "In caring for animals, moreover, the child learns to subordinate his pleasure to their good; purifies his selfish love for them into a thoughtful and protecting affection; and fosters in his own heart that spirit of goodwill and helpfulness which, transferred from feeble and defenseless animals to feeble and defenseless human beings, blossoms into the disinterested service of mankind."¹

The children's scientific study of the animals about them and in their care must, of course, be of a kind which will neither hurt, disturb, or frighten the friendly creatures. Any information about life, which the

How we
should
study Liv-
ing Things.

¹ Susan E. Blow, *Symbolic Education*, p. 136.

child gains at the cost of distress or pain to the living thing, will be information doubly cursed to the child and to mankind, for what is a man profited if he shall gain the whole world and lose his own soul?

And we may say much the same thing in regard to the plants and flowers the child studies. He is not to root them up and tear them to pieces for the sake of seeing how they grow and how they are made. This is a dangerous pastime for childhood, and belongs to the analytic method of later scientific study. "The most important things to be considered in this connection," says Dr. W. N. Hailmann, "are the various manifestations of life on the part of the animal or plant under observation. This demands patience and control of mere curiosity by a reverent regard for life itself. In hasty work, there is a tendency to forget this; to look upon a knowledge of the external features of the living thing as the chief concern, and to sacrifice life for the sake of examining the tools of life, or for the sake of making a collection of preserved specimens, as the savage rejoices in his collection of scalps. It is our purpose, throughout the primary period, to repress these tendencies by stimulating and encouraging the desire to observe, and nurture living things, and to describe animals and plants chiefly with reference to their life-manifestations, rather than with reference to their merely external forms and peculiarities."

While we begin by studying the living animals near at hand, and the plants within our care, we may later on, by means of pictures, reach out further and learn to know their kin in wood and field and in far-off countries. There are many pictures which can be made most useful in this nature-teaching ; for so we can show the child strange wild animals, peculiarities of structure which he could not see in the living things, and also illustrate the homes and the nests and cradles that they, as well as the mother plants, make for their babies.

Aids to
Nature-
study :
Pictures.

Poems which are true to nature, and which set some scientific facts in "fair memorable words," are always useful to the kindergartner, while some of them may be memorized by the older children. Stories, too, — of course the field for them is inexhaustible, and they are of the greatest possible benefit if they are founded on fact, well-written and well-told. They should not be so imaginative, however, as to obscure the truth we are trying to reveal, nor so bald and bare in style as to repel the children. All the books on botany and zoölogy contain useful material for stories, and even the encyclopedia and the dictionary are rich with suggestions if the reader have "the seeing eye." Should the kindergartner, however, be entirely out of the realm of books, she would still have stories enough for several generations of children in the

Poems and
Stories.

nature-lessons before mentioned, and these also have many helpful suggestions as to poems and pictures.

Although the children of most of our kindergartens be but city prisoners, yet they are not chained to their dungeon cells; and where a plant or animal cannot be seen at home, it is usually possible to go and visit it. Many kindergartens have parks and squares within walking distance, where a few of the children might be taken at a time to study the mysteries of the flowers; while most neighborhoods have at least one cow or goat, or flock of hens or ducks, that might be interviewed in a friendly way.

A real country ramble, where growing things may be seen in their proper environment, is a wonderful quickener of nature-study; for here one may gather specimens of leaves and nuts and mosses and flowers, pick up bright pebbles and stones, watch the birds and the fish in their happy freedom, note the habits of ants and bees and butterflies, and gather material for a host of questions which form the basis of subsequent science-lessons. Yet these country rambles are impracticable as yet for many of us, though the very demand for them will create its own supply in time.

Every kindergarten should have a cabinet in which specimens of all kinds are kept for play-

lessons, and these are very useful in nature-work. If we cannot watch the birds at their nest-building, we can study the wonderful products of their skill: if we cannot raise silk-worms, we can see the eggs, the cocoons, and the silk; we can have samples of flax, cotton bolls, rolls of wool, hornets' and spiders' nests, blown eggs of various kinds, paper made of various substances, and a very complete collection of shells. Some of these specimens may have been raised by the children in their gardens, as bulbs, roots, seeds, and pods; others be treasures brought home from woodland rambles, as lichens, fungi, ferns, nuts, autumn leaves, pebbles, common minerals and rocks: and the kindergartner may add to these, numerous specimens of pressed sea-moss, which, with its delicate branches and brilliant coloring, the children so delight to sketch and study.

One more aid to the wise love, protection, and sympathetic study of nature Froebel has given us in his games devised for that purpose, and these are unique in the history of educational methods. Nearly half the plays in the "Mutter und Kose-Lieder" are concerned with nature and natural phenomena; and the quaint, careful illustrations, executed according to Froebel's directions, all breathe the "deep love that lieth under all." As the child imitates the weathercock, beckons the chickens, mimics

Nature Col-
lections.

Games.

the fish in the brook, sings of the moon and the stars, plays at tending the flowers, portrays the life of the farmer, he is learning his kinship with nature, finding out that "we and they are His children, one family here," and learning his duties and responsibilities toward that family.

It is all play to us, but to the child it is the deepest earnest; for play is at once his life and his lesson, his work and himself. No better foundation for science or religion can be laid than that sincere and reverent interest in nature which has found out, by seeking, that in this universe of ours "all's love, yet all's law."

SYMBOLISM: ITS USE IN KINDERGARTEN SONGS AND GAMES

"Each thing around us speaks
A language all its own,
And, though we may have grown
Hardened and dull of ear,
The little children hear."

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

THE use of the symbols of nature as means of education is unique in Froebel's system of child-training, and rests upon his conviction that all natural phenomena are signs of spiritual truth to which they give expression, and, again, that we must help the child, through nature,

*Symbols in
Education.*

"To find those verities within himself
Of which all outward things are but the type."

Inspired by his belief that the development of the child must parallel the development of the race, he looked back through history and tradition to find that God has from the beginning trained humanity by means of symbols. "The undeveloped mind needs sensuous perceptions, the visible signs," argues Froebel, "in order to arrive at an understanding of

*The Child
and the
Race.*

truth. As the savage needs his fetich, as the people of antiquity in a higher state of culture personified their ideas in the form of gods and various allegories, as even the Christian church cannot make itself understood without symbols, without the cross and the host, so the deepest need of childhood is to make the intellectual its own through symbols or sensuous forms.”¹

A symbol may be considered to be a sensuous
What is a
Symbol? object which suggests an idea, or it may
 be defined as the sign or representation
 of something moral or intellectual by the images
 or properties of natural things, as we commonly
 say, for instance, that the lion is the symbol of
 courage, the dove the symbol of gentleness. It
 need not be an object, however, any more than
 an action or an event; for the emerging of the
 butterfly from the chrysalis may be a symbol of
 the resurrection of the body, and the silver lin-
 ing of a cloud typify the joy that shines through
 adversity.

Kindergarten symbolism has more than one
Kindergar-
ten Symbol-
ism. phase, for Froebel, as master of the
 symbol, well understood its value in ed-
 ucation. As applied to the gifts, it
 deals, as Miss Blow says, “more with poetic cor-
 respondences than with typical facts.” but in the
 plays and games the latter phase is developed; for
 we aim, by representation of the essential activi-

¹ *Reminiscences of Froebel*, p. 105.

ties of nature and of man, not only to understand those activities more clearly, since imitation is the first step towards comprehension, but also, by upholding the mirror of nature, to teach the soul to understand itself and its destiny more clearly.

In graphic and plastic art, in literature, in music, in religion, in language, in all life, the human mind has ever delighted itself with symbols; but it is not within the province of this little book to point out the eternal verities on which this universal delight is based, to cite the great thinkers of the world who have held to the essential relation of the natural and spiritual worlds, nor to trace the mystical correspondences of type and archetype. Our office just here is merely to give a simple explanation of the value of symbolism as illustrated in the kindergarten games, for these hand-books are only intended for beginners in the study of education, and the theory of symbolism as a whole is one which lies far beyond the scope of a single volume. Let those who would see more clearly the spiritual truths which underlie the subject, and which hide themselves from a hasty glance, first study the "Mother Play" and "The Education of Man" long and seriously, and then reach out into the general literature of symbolism. For the student of symbols as used in the kindergarten, Miss Blow's "Symbolic Education" will be found most inspiring as a commentary on Froebel's writings.

The study of symbolism, to some extent at least, is of the greatest importance to all teachers; for the understanding of the adult must come to the help of the child, to open doors of expression to the impulses that are darkly struggling within him, to guide those impulses in the right direction, to make clear to the little one his own symbolic thought, and to give fit nourishment to his later conscious life.

Froebel would have the child trained from the very beginning to look behind the effect to the cause, behind the symbol to the reality, behind the visible to the invisible; and the teacher who does not herself realize that

“Every natural flower which glows on earth
Implies a flower upon the spiritual side,”

cannot be trusted to develop the soul and mind of the child through the use of symbols.

To get at the spirit and inspiration of symbolic representation in song and game, it is necessary first of all to study Froebel’s “Mutter und Kose-Lieder.” The significant remark quoted in the Reminiscences is this: “He who understands what I mean by these songs knows my inmost secret.” Now Froebel spoke sometimes obscurely, but never lightly, and one is instantly impressed with the thought that here is something to be studied more deeply. The book is a collection of baby-plays gathered

Important
for all
Teachers.

Froebel’s
“Mother-
Play.”

among the German peasant mothers, divested by Froebel of all unnecessary or objectionable features, and thus reduced to the simple elements which God-given maternal instinct dimly felt to be essential. To these Froebel added various similar games, and each one in the collection may be considered a type of a class of plays which make the universal feelings, the ordinary surroundings, the trivial round, the common task of every child, so many rungs in a ladder to lead him daily nearer God.

Each play is preceded by a motto for the mother, giving suggestions as to the truths which the child's song symbolizes, and all are accompanied by pictures which are to be shown to the children, and which are in themselves an epitome of Froebelian philosophy.

You will find people who say that the music of the original version is poor, which is largely true, and that the versification is weak, which is sometimes, not always, true; but these objections have now disappeared, since there exist three English translations of the work, all of which have points of great value, the latest being provided with new and truly poetic versification and music.¹

Had all the objections, however, to music, pictures, and verses been cogent ones, the idea, the

¹ Friedrich Froebel, *Mother-Play* (2 vols.), translated and annotated by Susan E. Blow.

spirit, the continuity, of the plan would still remain matchless; and those who find no inspiration in the book are those to whom all deep-hid and spiritual truths must ever remain invisible, since they have not the seeing eye nor the understanding heart.

In this book are mirrored all possible childish experiences, and relationships within the family circle, with nature, and with God, and the kindergartner feels, when, after long study, she has partially learned that inmost secret of Froebel, as if she had indeed been born again.

It is this spiritual element in Froebel's philosophy, this spiritual element above all others, — the symbolisms of life which he interprets to us through the medium of the child, — that make the study a constant rise into higher atmospheres, — “an up, up, up from glory to glory.”

“The most delicate, the most difficult, and the most important part of the training of children,” says Froebel, “consists in the development of that inner and higher life of feeling and of soul from which springs all that is highest and holiest in the life of men and mankind,” — in short, the spiritual life, which is after all linked so closely to the life physical, each interpreting the other, — the spiritual life, that is at one with God in feeling, thought, and action.

When and where does this life begin? None

can tell. It is as with the seeds in spring-time : they remain long pent in the earth before they become outwardly visible ; yet, without the influence of sun and moisture, they would be forever hidden, and it is our mission as kindergartners to cherish the spiritual, as we nourish the physical and develop the intellectual in the child.

The underlying idea which gives to symbolism its effect is not easily comprehended, but after it has become a part of you, as it were, you will begin to see its beauty and significance, and everything henceforth will wear a new and shining face.

Underlying
Idea of
Symbolism.

Physical impressions are, at the beginning of life, the only possible medium for awakening the child's sensibility, and these impressions should therefore be regulated as systematically as possible and not left to chance. We present spiritual verities by means of symbols, for the child can grasp the symbol when the unknown truth is, perhaps, too subtle to be caught, but, after all, "it is the spiritual reality which the symbol suggests that allures the imagination." Since in the human organism as in all other organisms, later growth is the result of the earliest steps, and as all that is greatest and highest springs out of the smallest and lowest beginnings, education must endeavor to emulate this unbroken continuity of natural development. Froebel supplies the means for bringing about the desired result in a simple

system of symbolic songs and games appealing to the child's activities and sensibilities. These, he argues, ought to contain the germs of all later instruction and thought; for physical and sensuous perceptions are the points of departure of all knowledge.

When the child imitates he begins to understand, is the thought upon which many of the kindergarten games are based.

When he imitates the airy flight of the bird, he enters partially into bird life; when the little girl personates the hen with her feathery brood of chickens, her own maternal instinct is quickened while she guards and guides the wayward motion of the little flock. Let the child play the gardener and the farmer, then, and not only his knowledge of plants and animals is increased, but he learns a lesson of care and responsibility, of the loss which comes from neglect, and the love that grows from nurture. Let him personate the carpenter, the wheelwright, the wood-sawyer, the blacksmith, and his intelligence is immediately awakened to the force, the meaning, the power, and the need of labor. If he mimics the weathercock as it dances to the wind's piping, he will be led from visible effect to invisible cause, from the real to the spiritual; in short, if he mirrors in his play all the different aspects of universal life — vegetable, animal, human — his thought will begin to grasp their significance.

Imitation
and Compre-
hension.

Thus our plays may be defined as a "systematized sequence of experiences through which the child grows into self-knowledge, clear observation, and conscious perception of the whole circle of relationships," and when this growth is at length accomplished the symbol has become the truth itself, bound fast and deep in heart knowledge, which is a deal deeper and rarer than head knowledge, after all.

As we study the philosophy of Froebel, what do we find that he urges and reiterates most often? Not specific commands ^{Froebel's} ^{Convictions.} concerning object-lessons or manual occupations, important as these are considered in his plan. No, these points are but seldom spoken of, as compared to his repeated exhortations concerning the nurture of the child's own personality, his relation to the outer world, his fellows, and his God.

"Therefore, loving woman," he says, "the greatest problem and joy of your life is to feel yourself one with your child as with your God; your child one in itself, and also in active relations with the outer world, with mankind, and with nature; above all, as in unity with God, the Source and Father of all things, as a child of God, and to be brought up as such." He makes us feel that to comprehend a child, to understand his nature in its many-sidedness and interdependence of parts, — to form, to cherish, to develop him according to all the governing laws of his being, — that

this, and nothing less will solve the problem of the education of that child. And as we read his inspired testimony, we can but feel that Froebel walked in the light of the great Teacher himself, and that, since that one most beautiful and divine life that was lived so many years ago, there was never one more filled with God, one which has had a more ennobling influence upon posterity, or which has more elevated woman's work and mission, than that of Friedrich Froebel. In him, with all his frailties, was a divine humanity and a human divinity; and the more one studies his life, his work, and his writings, the more one wonders that the charge of atheism could ever for one brief moment have lain at his door.

Idealism in Education. Froebel's system of child-training could not have been the outgrowth of his peculiar mind had it failed to emphasize the need of soul-culture, for he recognized that one of the greatest problems of education lies in finding the best means of wedding the every-day material life to the higher, spiritual aims that stretch out over and beyond. There is little danger of too great idealism in American education; there is always, of course, danger of useless and unprofitable instruction everywhere, but our children seem to be growing rapidly enough into the mercantile spirit of the age, the racing and chasing after the dollar, and idealism surely cannot be called our national fault.

There is a great difference between impracticality and ideality, — a difference which is very commonly misunderstood. People talk much of the need of a more practical education, as if an education could be practical which was not spiritual. It is the seers, the poets, of the world who have shown us that the greater includes the less, the one the other, just as body is a shrine for soul.

“ Without the spiritual, observe
 The natural 's impossible, no form,
 No motion ; without sensuous, spiritual
 Is inappreciable, no beauty or power ;
 And in this twofold sphere the twofold man
 (For still the artist intensely is a man)
 Holds firmly by the natural to reach
 The spiritual beyond it ; fixes still
 The type with mortal vision to pierce through
 With eyes immortal to the antetype
 Some call the ideal, better called the real ;
 And certain to be called so presently
 When things shall have their names.” ¹

To the class of people occupied exclusively with material things, the spiritual side of Froebel's system may, perhaps, seem mystical, for striving after the material fills the whole existence of many persons and leaves no room for any higher aims. The truth is, the world is cumbered with people to whom nothing is real but eating, drinking, and trading. Anything higher is either not to be considered at all, or to be left for considera-

¹ E. B. Browning, *Aurora Leigh*.

tion in another world, where more leisure is presumably to be found.

Children, however, in their susceptibility, are most impressible to the influences of the spirit, and greet them as perfectly natural experiences. There is nothing mystical to them, all is real, for their visions have not been dispelled. As Wordsworth, the kindergartner's poet, says in the immortal Ode, —

Suscepti-
bility of
Childhood.

“ But trailing clouds of glory do we come
From God, who is our home ;
Heaven lies about us in our infancy.”

Would that we could keep these radiant visions, breathing delight and liberty, the simple creed of childhood, yet a little longer, before the years bring the inevitable yoke, and —

“ Custom lies upon us with a weight,
Heavy as frost and deep almost as life.”

The imitative instinct, as we have said, is the first spur to activity, but the child must be supplied with the necessary help and encouragement, or the “ perpetual mimicry ” becomes meaningless, and finally ceases altogether. In reality, word and symbol belong to and interpret each other, as inseparably as light and shade, day and night, soul and body. The more truths of every kind presented to children in a corporeal or symbolic form, the greater will their power of spiritual or abstract apprehension be in after years, for they

will have living images in their minds, not merely a stock of memorized statements.

In early childhood it is certain that all instruction which is conveyed solely in words is as good as lost. The human mind, in its first stage of development, must have corporeal demonstration ; ideas must be presented to it in visible images. Certainly humanity in its initial period sought and found God in this way ; and, before science could become exact, the world had first to gain general conceptions, which were reproduced roughly at first, and, as the mind of humanity matured, it grasped the pure abstract idea in its universality.

Growth of
Human
Ideas.

We see this plainly in the idols and religious rites of the heathens ; in the language, philosophy, worship, and art of the ancients ; in the endowing by primitive peoples of all inanimate objects with life and powers ; in the allegorical world of gods, demigods, and goddesses ; in the mythology of the Greeks and Romans, all striving through symbolism to make the unknown expressed and known ; the thing which was felt, uttered or utterable.

The truths of symbolism are, indeed, firmly rooted in human feeling, and the highest function of the symbol is to serve as a guide-post to the path of duty. The very sound of the drumbeat, "the cry of the bugles going by," the flutter of the flag, thrill the soldier and make him ready to lay down his life for his

Symbols of
the Present.

country ; and the symbol of the cross, to what glories has it not inspired the world ! The happy wife is loth to part with the golden circlet which prefigures the unending nature, the eternity, of human affection, for a ring is an emblem of fidelity, and has always been used symbolically ; indeed, the word *symbolum* for a long time meant ring. The circle signifies eternity, and the golden band has for ages been the outward sign of love or power.

To all of us, and especially to the child, who understands her symbolic language better than we who have “grown hardened and dull of ear,” nature speaks with a thousand voices. She has her mysterious revelations, all of which are felt rather than analyzed, and to each of us she tells a different tale, and has for each a different message. The fishes tell the child of freedom and entrancing motion, the “crystal fretting” of the brooklet sings him a song of joy in obstacles overcome, and in the placid surface of the pool he sees the image of his soul ; while the trees, rustling and swaying in the summer breeze, whisper him marvelous things not heard by other ears. He looks into the hearts of the flowers opening in the sunshine and reads tender secrets there ; the sunset clouds, floating in rosy glory through the western sky, shape themselves into gorgeous castles and heavenly visions ; the birds, the bees, and the butterflies all waft him a message from

Symbols
of Nature.

their wings; the bobolink, katydid, and thrush speak to him in modern English; he reads a fairy tale in the flames; he longs to make a bridge of the rainbow and walk thereon to heaven; the stars are God's tapers, the sun and moon his lamps by day and by night; the raindrops are the angels' tears; and as for himself, he has been sent a guest out of heaven to this hospitable earth, and all he has to do is to examine its treasures and be happy while he can.

When, however, the child has passed the period of unconscious susceptibility, when he begins to be aware of his own activities and the power of regulating them, he longs to imitate the actions of his future life. Nothing so delights the little girl as to play at housekeeping in her tiny mansion sacred to the use of dolls. See her whimsical attention to dust and dirt, her tremendous wisdom in dispensing the work and ordering the duties of the household, her careful attention to the morals and manners of her offspring. Hear her infantile lectures and wise sermons on etiquette and good behavior, and note how she reflects in all these conversations the standards and ideals of the grown-up world.

Prophetic
Plays of
Childhood.

The boy, too, tries to share in the life of a man, — to play at his father's work, to be a miniature carpenter, peddler, or soldier. He rides his father's cane and calls it a horse, in the same

way that the little girl wraps a shawl about a towel and showers upon it the tenderest tokens of maternal affection. Nay, she will do this if she has a mother cruel and unkind, or has never known a mother's care at all, so deeply implanted is love in the human heart, and so universal is the instinct of expressing it.

All these examples go to show that every conscious intellectual phase of the mind has a previous phase in which it was unconscious, or merely symbolic, for the preliminary symbol makes easy and natural the pathway to ideas and clear thought.

The Bible is full of symbolism, for preparation was necessary before the world was ready for the full reception of Christianity, and the undeveloped mind needs the visible sign before it is able to grasp the abstract truth. "From objects to pictures, from pictures to symbols, from symbols to thoughts," says Froebel, "leads the ladder of knowledge."

All the great phenomena of nature have been worshiped by races of men. The sun, moon, flames, beasts, waters, mountains, all have been deified: God revealed himself in a thousand different ways to the hearts of his waiting people. It was the childhood of the world; the thunder boom and lightning flash of Sinai, the budding rod, the burning bush, the pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, the bow in the heavens for

Symbolism
in Religion.

a promise, and finally the star in the east guiding the wise men to the Christ-child, whose sign appearing in the eastern skies symbolized the morning dawn of a new, perfect, spiritual Christianity, — these were some of the means by which the world was led into the domain of pure religion. The human race had to serve its apprenticeship before men were able to receive that “engrafted word” of which the Bible speaks. It was not an entirely new, but an “engrafted word.” So, in maturing life, the abstract truth may be grafted on the earlier symbolized truth. The lessons of the greatest and divinest of Teachers were almost uniformly in parables: indeed, parables teach us as would no other form of words; they remain longer in the mind and heart than mere moral lectures, simply because of their poetic significance and symbolic nature. A pointed illustration is always a star to a mind in darkness.

There exist, then, these deep analogies between the outer and the inner worlds, between the truths God writes in human hearts and those He proclaims through the thousand voices of earth. Dean Trench says these analogies are arguments and may be alleged as witnesses; the world of nature being throughout a witness of the world of spirit, proceeding from the same hand, growing out of the same root, and being constituted for this very end.

*Analogies
between Inner
and Outer
Worlds.*

Such also was Froebel's firm conviction: he believed that, by a process we cannot trace, the mind may move from the perception of the symbol to the conscious realization of the truth symbolized; and in encouraging the child to interpret the symbolisms of nature, and express himself symbolically, he believed that the analogies which underlie his action will in due course develop comparison and abstraction.

There are many persons, as we have said, who consider an education carried on by means of symbols a puerile thing indeed, and ill-adapted to prepare the child for practical life. Such people — they are all too easy to find — are possessed of what we call hard common-sense. The phrase, on which they pride themselves, is indeed their own undoing, for the greatest trouble with them is that their sense is all hard and all common. They fail to recognize a fact, which is so true that it will bear repetition, that education is *only* practical when it is spiritual. The only reason for education is, that we are human beings with souls, partakers of the divine nature; it is not merely to make people able to get their bread and butter. In the routine which runs through our daily teaching, there is a safeguard, but a danger also, and this is true of all routine. If we do not, through all these technicalities, see the wisdom of the design and the highest truth it

Common
Objection to
the use of
Symbols.

symbolizes, they are fruitless to us and every one else.

So let us make the child's life objective to him. Let us unlock to him the significance of family, social, and national relationships, that he may grow into sympathy with them. He loves the symbol which interprets his nature to himself, and in his eager play he pictures the life he longs to understand. If we could make such education continuous, none can doubt that he would unconsciously grow into harmony and union with

“ The Life of all Life,
The Light of all Light,
The Love of all Love,
The Good of all Good Things, —
God ! ”

THE TEACHING OF PATRIOTISM

“Land of the forest and the rock,
Of dark blue lake and mighty river,
Of mountains reared aloft to mock
The storm’s career, the lightning’s shock;
My own green land forever!
Oh, never may a son of thine,
Where’er his wandering steps incline,
Forget the skies which bent above
His childhood like a dream of love.”

J. G. WHITTIER.

THE kindergarten deals with the beginnings of things; it takes the human plant just budding into being, and strives to set it in a soil and surround it with an atmosphere which shall unfold the mental, strengthen the physical, and foster the spiritual powers. In the last direction, it addresses itself not only to the cultivation of the individual but also of the civic virtues, and not the least among its duties it counts the development of a love of country in the coming citizen. Froebel himself, as a patriot and a soldier, has left us a notable example of his devotion to duty, in the motives which led him to join the German army as a member of Baron von Lützow’s famous volunteer corps during the

Beginnings
of Things.

Napoleonic wars. He says that his avocation as a teacher influenced his action in the matter ; for every child who might later on come to be educated by him would have a fatherland, — a fatherland now requiring defense, although the child was not in a position to give it. " Shall I, then," he said, " seek without a blush to inspire the love of country if I fail my country in her hour of need ? "

There has been little systematic attempt, since the days of Greece and Rome, to cultivate patriotism as a virtue, and it is perhaps questionable from our modern standpoint whether those countries did not rather overdo the teaching, creating an education which was thoroughly particularistic, and which produced an ideal Greek or Roman rather than an ideal man.

Not so would we have patriotism taught to-day in every department of education : for we would make it a wider and a more inclusive study, using it as a foundation

True Patri-
otic Teach-
ing.

for a truer Americanism and a better, purer public spirit. It cannot be taught without touching all the springs of hero-worship, of ideality, of aspiration, if the historical facts on which it is based are treated in the right spirit, and that right spirit is the same to-day as it was when Montaigne said that we must not so much imprint on the pupil's memory the date of the ruin of Carthage, as the manners of Hannibal

and Scipio, nor so much where Marcellus died as why it was unworthy of his duty that he died there.

Our history teaching must necessarily be of the simplest kind in the kindergarten, for our children are far too young to appreciate the underlying laws which make it an "anatomy of philosophy," and according to the theory of culture-epochs it is an anachronism even to attempt to tell the little ones simple historical stories. Yet we personally do not give such complete adherence to this theory as to believe in a diet of fables, and fables only, for our very little folk, nor in myths and fairy tales alone for the older ones of the flock. We feel that there is a power of spiritual apprehension in the child which enables him to grasp truths which would at first glance seem far above him, and, although the motives for patriotism are largely beyond his ken, yet he may perceive them dimly, afar off, and that which he does not understand still aid in his development, for "childish wonder is the first step in human wisdom."

There are many simple agencies by which a love of country may be cultivated in the kindergarten, chief among which are those debatable things above mentioned, — the history tales. It is obvious that these must be brief, picturesque, free from date and detail, and so associated with concrete things, with the child's

History in
the Kinder-
garten.

History
Tales.

making and building and shaping, that they produce a definite impression on the mind. All the gifts and occupations lend themselves to the working out of historical subjects; and the sand-table, in which the children may carry out some idea in unison, is especially adapted to history teaching.

The kindergarten always makes wise provision for the celebration of the nation's holidays, aiming to give the children an ^{National} ^{Holidays.} idea of their historical and spiritual meaning, a reverence for the heroes who are associated with them, and a tender memory of the forefathers by whose trials and sufferings our land is free and beautiful to-day. There are a few of the so-called flag exercises which can be made appropriate for children of kindergarten age, and the mere marching with banners to patriotic airs, although a simple diversion, yet has a well-defined value. Alice Wellington Rollins says: "A child may forget or disdain a fact, but he never recovers from an impression. It is atmosphere, not dogma, that educates. . . . The ordinary school tells the child he ought to love his country; the kindergarten makes him love it. The one tells him facts about Washington and Jefferson and patriotic lives; the other gives him a little American flag to wave as he marches round the room to a stirring national air, and, behold! he himself has become patriotic."

There are various songs appropriate in sentiment which the children may learn, and which they sing with great zest and enjoyment on festal occasions, and, although the words of "America" are quite beyond them, yet the air is caught very quickly and seems to give particular delight. It is, in our opinion, much better to follow this plan — that is, to sing the tune but omit the words of some of the standard national airs — than to teach verses which are utterly unintelligible to the little child, or to substitute others which will only have to be unlearned by and by.

There is no question, of course, of the value of music in intensifying any sentiment, and whether, few and simple as are our national melodies, there is yet something in their composition which touches the springs of patriotism; whether the thrill and the heart-throb with which the teacher sings electrify the child with sympathy; whether, indeed, these old songs may not exhale the passionate devotion which so many dead lips have breathed into them, — we cannot tell, but we know practically that they have a certain effect upon the veriest baby.

Then there are pictures which may be made most valuable aids in the joint teaching of history and patriotism. Each national holiday should have its own special pictures, historically correct, well drawn, large

Patriotic
Songs.

Value of
Pictures.

enough to be seen by all the children on the circle, and brought out and hung, or drawn on the blackboard, only when preparations are being made for the celebration of the holiday. They need little comment or explanation; they will be looked at and remembered, do not doubt, and remembered all the more because they are not forced upon the child. Let us make every effort, however, that these pictures shall be really good ones, worthy facsimiles of the originals, for they will be ineffaceably photographed on the sensitive plate of the mind.

If the child has spent the years from three to six under the direction of a thoughtful kindergarten, who has made wise use of all the opportunities and agencies at her command to develop a love of country in his heart, even then a beginning only has been made which later education must continue. There can have been, in the nature of things, no connected historical teaching; and even if the music and poetry, the pictures and talks and stories, have been presented at the right time and given their fullest value, yet the subject is so broad and deep a one that we can scarcely be said even to have entered upon it with kindergarten children. Still, an interest in these things has been created, an impression has been made, and "these impressions," as Froebel said, "are the root-fibres for the understanding that is developed later."

As education progresses, as the child, the boy,
Later Education. the youth, grows older and more intelligent, a thousand opportunities present themselves for making patriotism a "sweet habit of the blood."

There is the wise study of history, the only
History. study, as Plato reports, which the Lacedæmonians reserved for themselves, and which bore its fruit in the notable deeds of their warriors.

Then there is the reading of hero-tales, and of
Fiction. the large body of fiction founded on American history which has been written for young people in late years; and when the child is old enough he may be given "The Man Without a Country," and in receiving that masterpiece of literature feel his whole life quickened with the vigorous inflow of a tide of patriotism.

And better still for the cultivation of the patriotic spirit is the memorizing of the
Poetry. really good poems, which can be found in abundance for every period of the story of our nation. "The children may be kept tuned by them," if we may apply to this subject Herder's famous saying, "like precious stringed instruments ready for the playing." And the result he predicts will not fail in coming, for "by the power of the spirit they will then vibrate and respond to the true chords in nature, and

through unconscious activity put forth their own music."

Another effective way of tuning these precious stringed instruments—a way which has not yet been tried to our knowledge in any of our schools—would be the placing on the walls of the school-rooms memorials to the heroic dead. It might be the nation's saints and heroes and martyrs; it might be the great soldiers and statesmen and writers and lawgivers; it might be only the upright man of pure life and sincerity of purpose, never heard of outside his own obscure village, but as valued and valuable in his sphere as he of world-wide fame.

Those who have visited the chapel of the United States Naval Academy know what a thrill of tender sentiment, what a glow of aspiration, what enthusiasm, what reverence, and what devotion, are kindled in the heart as one reads the bronze and marble memorial tablets on the walls of that little building. Better ten thousand times than a spoken discourse upon the brotherhood of man such a silent teacher as the following:—

To the memory of
CHAS. FLINT PUTNAM
Master U. S. Navy
Who volunteered for duty on board the
U. S. Steamer Rodgers, a vessel
Despatched to the Arctic Ocean
for the relief of the Jeannette
Exploring expedition.

After having
 Gallantly succored his shipwrecked companions
 while returning to his station at
 Cape Serdze Kamen, Siberia, he drifted out to sea
 And perished alone on the ice in St. Lawrence Bay
 Behring Straits, about January 11, 1882.

This tablet is erected by his friends and brother officers in
 loving remembrance and as a memorial of his heroic sacrifice.

And who has ever read this story in marble
 without being touched to higher things? —

In memory of
 Lient. John C. Talbot, U. S. N.
 Peter Francis, Quartermaster,
 John Andrews, Coxswain,
 James Miner, Captain of Hold,
 All of the U. S. S. Saginaw,

Who were drowned
 December 19, 1870, while attempting to land
 On the Island of Kauai, in the North Pacific
 Ocean, after a boat voyage of fifteen hundred miles,
 Voluntarily undertaken in search of
 Aid for their wrecked shipmates on Ocean Island.

To commemorate their adventurous voyage,
 In admiration of their heroism,
 And to keep alive the remembrance
 Of their noble and generous devotion,
 This tablet is inscribed by their shipmates,
 And by officers of the U. S. Navy.

“Greater love hath no man than this,
 That a man lay down his life for his friends.”

Few of the hundreds of young men who attend service in that chapel can have looked unmoved on these memorials, and to how many must they have been a never-failing spring of inspiration!

Might not such silent teachers be well employed in the service of all the children of the nation, and would not their very silence allow us to hear more clearly their eternal meanings?

Undoubtedly, in late years, a certain spirit has begun to show itself in our country which has been called "a revived Amer-
Revived
American-
ism.
 icanism," not a spirit of boastfulness or exclusiveness, not Americanism with a war-whoop, as Colonel Higginson calls it, but an appeal to the best instincts of the people, who, remembering the cost of their liberties, must ever be ready to sacrifice everything for their preservation.

The modern societies of Sons and Daughters of the Revolution, the Colonial Dames, etc., all sprung from the goodly seed sown by the Society of the Cincinnati, are evidences of this spirit; and their meetings, their celebrations, the collections which they are making of national relics, the interest and enthusiasm which they manifest in the preservation of historic sites, are all so many object-lessons in patriotism to our children. Another object-lesson is given whenever a national holiday is celebrated with wisdom and dignity, and whenever a new statue or monument is erected to the memory of courage and honor, to

heroism, deathless fidelity, and devotion to principle.

The historic celebrations which many of our cities and towns and villages have been conducting since the republic reached its hundredth year are most valuable, not simply as pageants and as reproductions of the day, but as quickeners of the sense of patriotism in every heart, and of a patriotism which will bear rich fruit in a better public spirit by and by. We need to be reminded now and then, even the oldest and wisest amongst us, of the great events in our history, and of the many reasons which we have for pride and gratitude as a nation; for, remembering our past, we shall gain greater strength for the struggles of the future.

We need to remember and to reverence our heroes. Too engrossing a hero-worship in our children is not to be feared, for ideality is scarcely their besetting sin, and the higher their aspirations the higher they must climb to reach them.

"The greatest thing a hero does for the race," says the Rev. William Alger, "is to have been a hero, and thereby inspire others to heroic living," and it is this inspiration which we wish to give our children.

Throughout this chapter on patriotism we have, since we are Americans, naturally spoken of the history and traditions of the United States. It is not our purpose, however, to exalt our own land

at the expense of others ; nor to foster in our children a spread-eagle Americanism which, because of its own screaming, is deaf to the patriotic song of other lands. We realize gladly that there is no nation which has not many passages in its history of which it may well be proud, as there are few human lives which have no glorious struggles, victories, or providences to celebrate.

Yet the principles on which the virtue is based are the same in every country, and, in so far as it can be cultivated in children, would be rooted in the same soil and nourished by the same influences in Iceland as in Chili.

The patriotism which we would teach is a fabric of many threads, — of gratitude, aspiration, hero-worship, noble self-sacrifice, devotion to duty, loving brotherhood, — all dexterously woven together into a warp of tenderness for native land, —

“ Land of the forest and the rock,
Our own green land forever ! ”

CONNECTION OF CONTRASTS

THE LAW OF BALANCE

"The whole meaning of my educational method rests upon this law alone. The method stands or falls with the recognition or non-recognition of it. Everything that is left is mere material, the working of which proceeds according to the law, and without the law would not be practicable."

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

"Our little lives are kept in equipoise
By opposite attractions and desires ;
The struggle of the instinct that enjoys,
And the more noble instinct that aspires."

H. W. LONGFELLOW.

THIS law, which enters into all Froebel's educational theories, was called by him the law of the mediation of contrasts ; but some persons object that this name recalls too generally the ruling philosophy of his time. Dr. William T. Harris speaks of it as an outgrowth of Schelling's "Philosophy of Identities," which he considers a pantheistic system when logically carried out ; but he expressly adds that in his opinion Froebel did not intend to follow the philosophy strictly, but merely used it as a foundation for thinking activity. Schelling's sys-

Froebel
and
Schelling.

tem of Identities is both crude and uncertain, if we accept Dr. Harris' verdict upon it, and we may be willing so to do, since he is regarded as one of the broadest and deepest of our thinkers; but he distinctly says that, though this imperfection in reasoning may belong to the interpreters of Froebel's views, he does not regard it as a fault of Froebel's system as he himself expounded it, and certainly not of his pedagogies, which he considers profound and consistent both in theory and practice.

Schelling, a German philosopher of Froebel's time, was at first a follower, though an eloquent and independent one, of Fichte, the pedagogic statesman. In what may be called the second and most famous part of his philosophical career, however, he came to consider Fichte's teachings as one-sided and incomplete, and broke away into the new speculations which he called the Philosophy of Identities. He succeeded Fichte at the University of Jena. The last part of his life was occupied mostly in controversy, for a rival and antagonist had arisen in Hegel, who was at one time his friend and fellow-student. Froebel was undoubtedly strongly influenced by Schelling's philosophy, for his writings and those of his disciples were early introduced to his attention, and became the subject of his constant study and meditation.

Froebel's thought of the mediation of contrasts

would perhaps be more clearly followed by describing it as the law of the continuous, unbroken development of the child's consciousness out of his own activities. The Baroness von Marenholtz sometimes concentrated the idea in the three phrases, "Freedom for development, labor in development, and connection of and unity in all development." In science the same law would be formulated differently, that is, the connection of attraction and repulsion is called gravitation, while naturalists would speak of it as the law of universal exchange of matter.

At the very outset it must be remembered that

Develop-
ment *vs.*
Instruction.

Fröbel's plan of education is one of development, and not one of instruction.

He separates instruction from development very sharply, likening the instructed mind to a river which flows round cliffs and impediments, narrows and widens according to necessity, crooks and bends, and skillfully and smoothly creeps to the ocean. Such a stream, hedged in by cliffs and impeded by rocks, is not adapted to great things, — to commerce; it loses its idea, its aim, for the aim of the living flood is to be the means of culture. The developed man is like a stream whose powerful rush demolishes the rocks, levels the hills, pulses like a great vein through the earth, drawing thousands of cities to its brink, and tracing out the highway of commerce and culture. "If man is developed like

the last-mentioned stream," says Froebel, "he knows but one goal to his life, and that is to develop himself by developing humanity." Herein lies the essential difference between Froebel and all previous educators. Pestalozzi, for instance, far greater than his predecessors, said, "Study the being of man in its manifestations of individuality;" while Froebel said, "Ground the being of man upon the macrocosmos." (It will be remembered, of course, that in the philosophy of the Middle Ages the macrocosm expressed the universe, or the visible system of worlds; and the microcosm — literally, the "little world" — denoted man, the essence or epitome of the great world.) Froebel therefore decided to found his system upon the principles on which all science rests, and on which he declared that all pedagogical science should consequently rest, since the laws of the mind are and must be identical with the laws of the universe.¹

But whatever may be said of the religious views of his famous contemporaries, there can be no shadow of pantheism cast upon Friedrich Froebel's educational philosophy. He declares that

¹ "This law he calls the law of the connection of opposites, which is expressed in the material world in the law of gravitation, and which also finds its application in the spiritual world in the compensation of ever-recurring opposites, — in the restoration of equilibrium. The everywhere perceptible analogy between the thought and its material appearance logically demands the identity of law in both domains as held by Froebel." — *Reminiscences of Froebel*, p. 286.

his system is founded upon religion and must lead to religion, and, again, that he works in order that Christianity may become realized. No greater enemy to materialism can be conceived than this man of pure enthusiasm, noble striving and high capacity of self-sacrifice, and only those who are ignorant of his life and his writings could doubt the reality of his religious feeling.

The Kindergarten
founded on
Religion.

To return more specifically to the subject,

The Universal
World-
Law.

Froebel's constant endeavor was to attempt to reconcile the workings of nature with the inner world of man, and to find the points of unity between the two. To understand the connection of all the phenomena of the outward world, and the way in which they harmonize with the spiritual world, and thus to build his system of education upon the universal world-law, was the hope and aspiration of his life.

The law of balance was not Froebel's in the same sense in which the great law of gravitation was Newton's. He did not by his own observation establish a certain order of facts, or define the measure of a certain force, for the law had been in existence since the foundation of the world. It had been recognized in its effects upon various phenomena, and had been regarded by many philosophers as the necessary condition of thought; but Froebel was the first person who recognized it as a principle of universal application upon

which education might be founded ; and his system of child-training is nothing more or less than a constant obedience to it at every stage of development ; that is, " it regulates the natural, spontaneous activity of the child according to its own inherent law, in order that the purposes of nature, the complete development of all the natural faculties, may be fulfilled."

This individuality and boldness of thought explain to us why Froebel in his lifetime was so often misunderstood, scorned, and condemned. His ideas were too new, too seemingly mystical, to be understood at once by the mass of his hearers, and in that day, as at present, anything startling or reformatory in its tendencies was called, by a snap-judgment, impossible, and heretical to past pedagogic science. Many people still, who claim to understand his system, understand it only superficially, and fail to place proper stress upon those principles which he himself declared to be its absolute basis, namely, his wish that the free spontaneous activity of children should be systematically, yet unconsciously regulated in the same manner as is the whole natural world.

Before dwelling upon the efficacy or influence of this law of mediation of opposites as applied to education, we must first study The Outer World. it in the outward world, and perceive its universality. We will look at it in the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms, in its relation to

art and beauty, æsthetics, and in that which is moral and spiritual, the world of ethics. We will consider it philosophically, intellectually, and spiritually, in that which is animate and inanimate ; only then can we comprehend its significance.¹

With the use of the law, in absolutely every gift and occupation of the kindergarten, we can soon become familiar, for there it is merely objective, easily demonstrated and understood.²

Indeed, even before we look deeper, we see it very simply and plainly in the smallest outward appearances of the kindergarten, which is the much-needed mediation between home and school, and the true kindergartner the link between the often too widely separated opposites, mother and teacher. The day's pleasures are alternated opposites ; work and play both drawn together and commingled one with the other, — work simplified by thoughtful love until it becomes play, and play itself systematized, refined, robbed of all its lawlessness, and diverted into the channel of cheerful, united action. This very play, indeed,

¹ "Attractions and repulsions are dominant in the celestial mechanism ; actions and reactions in chemistry ; movements of contraction and expansion in the heart ; expiration and inspiration in the lungs ; venous and arterial blood in the body ; positive and negative electricity in the magnetism of nature ; antipathies and sympathies in the human magnetism." — E. Castelar.

² In "The Republic of Childhood," vol. i., *Froebel's Gifts*, the simple contrasts and connections lying in each gift are pointed out in every case.

is the most perfect connection of opposites; for the child mirrors in it the life of manhood into which he is growing day by day, and also the animal life so far removed from his, and yet connected with his knowledge, affection, tenderness, and sympathy by his merry sharing of it in play.

But we must also consider the law subjectively.

We will glance first at the plants, for it was a humble little flower which taught The Plant World.

Froebel dimly to suspect the secrets of life which he afterwards saw everywhere with the clear vision of the seer. He perceived when a boy, he tells us, that every single petal was in itself a whole, but at the same time only a part; then, again, the flower was a whole in itself, but also a part of the whole plant; the plant was a whole, but also a part of the plant family to which it belonged, and this, again, a part of the genus. Thus, as a child, Froebel remarked the membership of all natural objects.

"If you would study intellectual science," we once heard Mr. Emerson remark, "you must first study natural history, for every law you deduce from the phenomena is a principle of the mind," and "every law of nature is a law of education," said Froebel.

All organic forms witness to this wonderful law of contrasts and their mediations. Look at the germinating seed, which, planted in any possible way, turns its plumule up towards the light and air,

and forces its rootlet down into the earth. The tiny forget-me-not, opening its blue eye to the sunshine, and the valiant oak that breasts the storms of centuries, are all governed by the same law of growth ; while the topmost leaf, waving high as the bird flies, and the patient root, boring its way in the bosom of the earth, are not only visibly connected by the stalwart trunk, but have their true union in the sap-current, pulsing its way through every vein and fibre of the tree.¹ Every plant also shows us the law at work within itself, — inner and outer, force and matter, cause and operation, the visible and the invisible.

In the organism of animal bodies we again find illustrations of the mediation of contrasts, in the limbs set opposite each other, as are the corresponding petals of flowers ; in the circulation of the blood, the expansion and contraction of the lungs, the exhalation and inhalation of air, etc. ; and thus we find the law of balance to be the ground-law of the universe.

Nor can we except the inorganic kingdom as failing to subject itself to this principle, for those of the seeing eye and understanding heart can follow the “ divine geometry,”

¹ “ The tree that climbs the highest, and lifts its leaves most freely in the air and in the sunshine, must have its roots firmly in the lowly earth. The lark, whose swift flight is the loftiest, and whose floods of melody descend like heavenly music even when the singer has passed from sight, builds its nest in the grass.”

from the lilies of the sky, the floating snowflakes, to the lilies of the rocks, the wonderful crystals.

Chemistry and astronomy only offer us increased phenomena. Our globe is kept in its orbit by the perfect adjustment of contrary forces, for the centrifugal and centripetal forces rule in the cosmic universe only through great mutual deference and courtesy ; the centrifugal forces would fling the planets off into space were it not for the force of gravitation, and the force of gravitation would hurl them against the sun were it not for the centrifugal forces.

Chemistry
and As-
tronomy.

But let us follow another train of thought. In poetry, rhythm comes only from connecting the cadences of long and short lines and syllables ; in music, the fullest harmony is brought out by welding into one melodious chord dissimilar tones ; — the deeper reverberating note brought into harmony with the upper and finer tones by all that falls between. In the chromatic scale every half-tone is the bridge that unites one tone to another : and you will find the Baroness von Marenholtz alluding in this connection to the simple chord, the basis of musical harmony, in which the opposites, the keynote and the fifth, are reconciled by the third.

Poetry and
Music.

In art it will readily be seen that all effects are produced by mingled lights and shadows, and also by sudden shocks of contrast ; that the beauty of perspective is in bringing the

Art.

far near ; that in the clever blending of opposite colors we get the loveliest tints ; and that he only is a master of color who can mix these contradictory shades into a new and harmonious blending. When we consider the matter, the number of elements is infinitesimally small, but the vast power of combination seems to grow with every advancing step of science and art.¹

In sculpture, true proportion alone gives to the chiseled marble the wished-for grace and beauty ; and proportion, of course, is but the mediation of the height to the breadth, the length to the width, and the proper balance of the parts to the whole. Ruskin says: "Symmetry is the opposition of equal quantities to each other. Proportion is the connection of unequal quantities with each other."

And as Froebel, whenever making a fresh discovery in the outer world of nature,
Soul Life.
was continually seeking a corresponding point in the inner world of feeling and thought, we find him alluding to the continual adjustment of opposites in the life of the human soul as well as in the life of nature. "As the opposites of day and night are connected by twilight, as sum-

¹ "Relativity appears in all the Fine Arts under the name of Contrast, and necessitates that in every kind of knowledge there should be a real negative to every real notion or real proposition: straight, curved ; motion, rest ; mind, extended matter or extended space ; in short, knowledge is never single, but is always double or two-sided, though the two sides are not always both stated."—Alexander Bain, *Mind and Body*, pp. 46, 47.

mer and winter by spring and autumn, so in the human soul do the day and night of conscious and unconscious life, the light and darkness of good and evil, activity and rest, happiness and sorrow, alternate with one another."

As we have already said in passing, mental development is based upon this law. The mind receives impressions from the out-^{Mental Life.}side world, which it gives out again in word and action, and there is a continual change and interchange between thing and thought, and thought and thing. We can recognize nothing until it is compared with the opposite, so variety is constantly supplied throughout the universe; and for the mind's movement as a whole, the contrasted processes of analysis and synthesis are necessary.¹

The law is only lightly touched upon here, for it is a difficult one to explain to beginners in the study of Froebel; it is difficult, save for a trained metaphysician, to follow it in the higher regions where it rules, and yet it is so simple in its practical workings that the kindergarten child of five years *uses* it successfully. Here, again, are the "wise and prudent" and the "babe" contrasted; but Froebel explains the child's success

¹ "We *analyze* only that we may comprehend, and we comprehend only inasmuch as we are able to reconstruct in thought the complex effects which we have analyzed into their elements. This mental reconstruction is, therefore, the final, the consummative procedure of philosophy." — Sir William Hamilton.

in applying the principle by the fact that it is the law according to which he, as a creature of God, has himself been created. He does not need to learn it, for it is born within him.

Now you say, perhaps, this may be all very true, but what is its application to education? It may be conceded to be a philosophical fact, but, as the child has no conception of it, how does it affect him? It is not necessary, in the first place, that the child should recognize any process as going on within his mind. Whether he be conscious or unconscious of it, it will still go on, and go on systematically; but if we believe at all in one of the cardinal points of all educational creeds, namely, in the A B C of things before the A B C of words, we must agree that the first sense-training must be properly given, or true understanding will be lacking in the future. If the kindergarten have a just conception of the law and its importance, she will supply materials by which the child may learn its practical workings, knowing no more of its intellectual basis than he knows of the composition of the sun that warms his world. It is obvious enough, however, that the sun will continue to shine upon him, whatever the depth of his ignorance, and it is equally obvious that his comprehension or non-comprehension of the law will have little bearing upon its workings. Let those who have seen the child make use of it

Application
to Educa-
tion.

in the kindergarten testify to its value as applied to education.

If we have found that the reconciliation of opposites is the law of human thought, of moral life, and of the physical world, — The Law of all Activity. in a word, the universal law, — then it must be the law of all activity. The Baroness von Marenholtz says, in "Child and Child Nature:" "If, then, the full development of human nature rests on this universal law of activity, there can be no other rule for the guidance of this development in children and youth, or, in one word, for education. Nature follows this law in her dealings with children, and, if education is to be in accordance with nature, it must do the same; and only when this fundamental principle is recognized, followed, and applied in the development of human nature, with full understanding of its aim and object, will education be raised to the level of art or science." That is, as Froebel states it, "If this law guides the process of spiritual development in early childhood, or in the period of non-deliberate action, educators must regard it as the law of nature for the human mind if they are to proceed according to nature; and they must apply this law in their method, and, above all, lead children to apply it themselves in whatever they do, and do this from the beginning of the child's development, in the stage of unconscious existence, which is the germ of all others.

In this way the human mind will be trained to render to itself an ever clearer and clearer account of the laws of its thinking and acting, while an opposite method of education would more or less hinder the mind from attaining the power of clear thought."

So, in the kindergarten gifts and occupations, in order that the child may distinguish different qualities of things, and in order that the process may be facilitated, he is given objects in which marked contrasts are presented, and these contrasts grow less marked as his powers increase. We can but notice, as we review Froebel's educational system, his wide knowledge of this universal law, and its obvious expression in all his appliances. Here are a few of the leading truths presented in the first gift, for instance, — the contrasts in the colors, with intermediate connecting links ; the motions in opposite directions, in straight and curved lines ; the ball itself as a separate individuality in contrast to the child ; the one and the many, etc. You will notice how the child's attention is aroused by these contrasts, expressed each in its turn clearly, without confusion ; you will see how eagerly he observes with the eye and experiments with the hand ; how joyously he greets every discovery of relationship, however vaguely it may impress his mind.

All these contrasts lying in the gift — con-

trasts of color; of one ball and many balls; of rest and motion; of motion in opposite directions, in straight and curved lines; of motion from without, when the ball is thrown, and motion from within, when it rebounds — appear clearly, distinctly, boldly, free from all confusing mixtures of more complex contrasts of shape, size, divisibility, variability, and plasticity.

In this way the recognition of the properties of the ball is rendered complete, and thus Froebel clearly shows one practical application of this law, which is at once so simple and profound. Of course it is not expected that the child shall comprehend these things as abstractions, or ever hear of them as such, — he will work out the law in all the occupations of the kindergarten; he will practice it in all his plays and inventions with the gifts. As science is based on experimental knowledge, so the child's knowledge is experimental.

It is characteristic of the practical side of Froebel's nature that he does not lay down as a principle the value of this law to ^{Learning by Doing.} educators, and then leave its carrying out to individual methods. Not only does he philosophize upon the doctrine, but he furnishes objects which the child may handle until he learns, by doing, the practical bearing of the law. Opposites are essential, it is true, to mental and spiritual development, but they must not remain opposites, for

the essence of the Froebelian philosophy is that not until their union, accord, and similitude are found, will their recognition be complete. And here is another point to be noted. The child is not to sit helplessly by, waiting for the union to appear; he is to learn by his own self-activity how to discover the connections, if they are visible, or, if they have not yet appeared, to create them by his own efforts. Thus he is to learn by play with concrete things in earliest childhood that in himself, and in his own activities, lies the solution of all contradictions; and not only so, but that there are not and cannot be any contrasts so great that they have not "somewhere and somehow their intermedium and union."

The "Mother Play" games of "Falling, falling," "Hide and Seek," "The Cuckoo," and "The Bridge," with their pictures, mottoes, and commentaries, offer ample illustration of Froebel's conviction of the moral value of uniting contrasts, and emphasize not only his religious mysticism but his originality of thought. It was a favorite principle of Robertson's—one upon which he based all his famous controversial teaching—that "all high truth is the union of two contradictions," "a statement of two opposites, both remaining undiluted, not a *via media* between them, or either of them alone;" "a larger truth, which absorbs them both, and annihilates their respective errors."

Moral Value
of Uniting
Contrasts.

According to him, the truth is never to be found in any middle, moderate, timid doctrine which skillfully avoids extremes ; but in a truth larger than either of the opposite views, which is the basis of each, and which is really that to which each party tenaciously clings, as a matter of life and death.

Who shall say, then, that a system of training the child to reconcile extremes by his own deed — of teaching him by experience that there must in the nature of things be a point of union for all apparently hopeless contradictions, — who shall say that this will not be one of the most valuable of life's possessions ?

We cannot afford to be skeptical as to the possibility of teaching high spiritual truths by means of childish plays. Childhood is the appointed time, and play the appointed method for these lessons, and one reason for the great extension of the period of infancy and helplessness in the human being is that there may be time for the plenteous sowing of just such spiritual impressions.

FROEBEL'S MOTHER PLAY

"Use the book so that it may preserve for the child the first tender buds of thought and experience, and help him to conceive his life, not in the isolation of its particular acts, but in the unity of its process. By so doing you will bridge the gulf between the unconscious and conscious periods of life."

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

FROEBEL'S "Mother Play," the kindergarten Bible, cannot be dealt with in a chapter, nor in a series of chapters; in one volume, nor in a series of volumes. It might well demand for its fit elucidation an army of commentators numerous as that which has toiled over the dramas of Shakespeare, and an array of their recorded opinions weighty with matter as the books of the Cumæan Sibyls.

Not only so, but the book is so unlike all others — so spiritual, so mystical, so deeply philosophic, so elusive in its higher, finer qualities — that every commentator differs a little from every other commentator in his explanations of its inner meaning. It is like an invisibly suspended crystal sphere, through whose translucent surface glows a soft pure light, generously irradiating all, yet disclos-

The Kindergarten Bible.

Commentators and Commentaries.

ing not to hastily glance the secret of its burning. But that secret, in the time-worn Scripture phrasing, is sometimes hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. There is such a thing as too much commenting on Froebel; such a flood of explanation as to obscure the real meaning. It reminds one of reading Shakespeare with elaborate marginal notes, which, as some one said, is like playing the piano-forte with mittens on; or of that dear old lady who had always been able to understand the Bible until she read "Barnes' Notes." Commentaries are valuable because each mind catches the light of truth at a different angle, and we may not content ourselves with the gleam we get in our own little corner; yet, after all, the original work is and must be the source of inspiration, and nobody else's vision will at all serve as a substitute for the use of our own eyes.

"Die Mutter und Kose-Lieder" was written seventeen years after the "Education of Man," and toward the close of Froebel's life, when his insight was at its keenest and the flower of his experience in richest bloom. It is thus, as Miss Blow says, "his most triumphant achievement;" and that he himself felt it to be so, that he regarded it as his message to the future, is abundantly evident from all that he says concerning it. First published more than fifty years ago, it was not translated into English

The Book
and its
Translations.

until 1879,¹ when two Americans (we are proud to say) took the beautiful and noble work in hand. A second translation was made in England in 1885 by Frances and Emily Lord; and a third, also by an American, Susan E. Blow, has just appeared (1895).

Froebel made the book a foundation for his lectures on theory to his own kindergarten students, and it was of course used privately by many training-teachers in this country and in England long before it attained the dignity of a published English form. Thus the date 1879 does not represent the introduction of the English-speaking kindergartners to Froebel's philosophy of education as laid down in the *Mother Play*; for the original, in its various editions, was at our service, and even those who did not read German were not without the gospel, for all our traditions were thrilled with its spirit.

Every year, however, since the first translation appeared, increased interest in the book has been felt in the kindergarten world, and where, fifteen or twenty years ago, only the training-teacher possessed a copy and read from and explained it to her class, each student is now expected to own one as a necessary part of her equipment. No scheme of kindergarten training is complete to-day without a faithful

Increased
Study of the
Mother
Play.

¹ First translation by Josephine Jarvis and Fanny E. Dwight. Lee & Shepard.

study of, and course of critical lectures upon, the Mother Play; everywhere experienced kindergartners band themselves together for post-graduate courses in the philosophy it embodies, and the most helpful and successful commentators are much in request as lecturers on this or that song, or class of songs, or on the entire scheme of the book.

Of late, too, other educators have wakened to the merits of the Mother Play, and, now that the last translation is published in the International Education series, this awakening will become more general, and all earnest mothers may learn from Froebel, if they choose, how, by beginning at the proper stage of development, they may "accomplish, by a touch light as a feather, what later they could hardly do with a hundred-weight of words."

The "Mutter und Kose-Lieder" is absolutely unique in the world's catalogue of books. It had no progenitors, and has no descendants in strict line; and although it is not perfect in workmanship, yet in conception and inspiration it ranks among the masterpieces of literature. If we reverence Goethe, Dante, and Shakespeare for their insight into human nature, for the skill with which they felt the pulse of life, so must we reverence Froebel, who "saw as never man saw before into the heart of the child." While other great books treat of developed man,

Place of
Mother
Play in
Literature.

man in the maturity of his powers, the Mother Play treats of man in embryo, Froebel himself saying that the book was an attempt to aid the mother to recognize in the period of earliest childhood the germ of all later life.

Froebel recounts as follows the incident which led to his writing the Mother Play.

Incident that led to writing the Book. "As I was walking one day through the fields," he writes, "there came towards me a mother carrying her baby on her arm. "Call the chickens!" she cried to the child, at the same time showing him how to beckon with his finger. Deeply impressed with the simple act, its grounds and consequences, I went home and wrote out the little game, 'Calling the Chickens.' Another and another followed, and soon I had quite a collection of songs and games. I sent them, as I wrote them, to a mother whose little child was ill. She assured me she could not thank me enough for the delight they gave him, and thus gradually, through a constant interchange of thought and feeling with mothers, grew this book."

A simple incident, one would think, to lead to the writing of such a work; but it is a truism to say that effects are not proportionate to causes, for

"See how this mere chance-sown, cleft-nursed seed,
That sprung up by the wayside 'neath the foot
Of the enemy, — this breaks all into blaze,
Spreads itself, one wide glory of desire
To incorporate the whole great sun it loves
From the inch-height whence it looks and longs."

Many of the songs in the "Mutter und Kose-Lieder" were adapted by Froebel from the traditional baby-plays he saw in use among the German peasant mothers, — plays which had been handed down from generation to generation, and which exist in essentials wherever a mother and child are found. They are necessarily better preserved, however, in sequestered places where the progress of civilization has been little felt, and where the mother has remained a more purely instinctive creature; and thus the quiet rural neighborhoods in which Froebel wandered were to him rich store-houses of material for his projected volume. The plays he found in actual use he supplemented by others of his own composition, founding them on characteristic incidents of child-life that came to his notice; others were suggested by mothers with whom he corresponded in regard to the scheme of the book; and others still were written by his wife, and played by her with the children of Middendorf, Froebel's life-long friend. We have now and then in Froebel's own words an account of some simple occurrence which formed the basis for one of these little plays. He says, for instance: "While paying a round of visits, I went to stay with a great fancier of pigeons; my room at his house was close to them. I could hear them talking together very often, and particularly when they had just returned home. This is what led to

the completion of my pigeon song for my little ones, —

“And when they get home you will hear them all say,
How delightful it was out of doors to-day! —
Coo-roo, roo-coo, coo-roo!”

From this incident he deduces, in his wise commentary, the desirability of leading children to recount, when they return home, all the little happenings of their walks, the mother making explanations of them: —

“Ask them of each sight and happening
In the quiet twilight hour;
Help them weave it all together
Like a garland, flower to flower.

“With the years, the larger knowledge
Of life's wholeness then will come,
And its twilight hour will find them
With themselves and God at home.”¹

The “Mutter und Kose-Lieder” consists, first, of seven “Mother Communings” in verse, descriptive of the feelings of the mother in unity with her child, observing his development, talking to him, holding him to her breast, and watching his manifestations of life. Then follow fifty symbolic songs, each one of which illustrates some arc in the first circle of the earliest child-life in its unfolding; the last one, “Closing Thoughts,” being intended for the mother alone, and summing up the results presumably attained by the experiences which the songs

Plan of
Book.

¹ Friedrich Froebel, trans. by Henrietta R. Eliot.

rehearse. Each little play is preceded by a motto for the mother, suggesting or explaining the deeper meaning which underlies the apparently simple life-manifestation of the child, —

“As, hidden in the uncut gem, there lies
A rainbow waiting to delight our eyes.”

Music is provided for each song, and all but three of them are accompanied with symbolic and wonderfully comprehensive pictures. Add to these Froebel's own explanations of the illustrated title-page, the cover, the Mother Communings, and the entire series of pictures and plays, and you have the scheme of the book.

The music to the songs was written under Froebel's direction by his disciple, Robert Kohl, and, as a whole, is not particularly successful, although several of the songs, with a little adaptation, are still used and found pleasing in our modern kindergartens. The verses in the original are not remarkable examples of poetic form, for Froebel, as Dr. Harris says, “was not a poet so much as a religious mystic.” We must remember, too, that the thoughts he was struggling to express were mighty ones that could hardly be set to the tinkle of ordinary musical verse, and that probably the form of the message seemed to him of no moment at all compared to the truth it proclaimed.

The pictures were drawn by Friedrich Unger, a former pupil of Froebel's, and a painter in a

Music,
Poems, and
Pictures.

neighboring village, and to our minds are marvelous in the tender fidelity with which they adhere to the symbolic character of song and motto. They were entirely a labor of love, for Froebel had nothing but gratitude to pay for the work, and Unger knew this before he began the sketches. There are traditions that the painter often came over to Keilhau in the evening with a finished picture, which would prove so utterly inadequate that Froebel would destroy it in despair. Then Unger would say, "Tell me, only tell me, what you want and I will try again;" and sometimes Froebel would sit beside him for hours, explaining his ideas, and how he fancied they might be carried out with the pencil. All but seven of the pictures are set in the midst of outdoor life, — are surrounded with flowers, or given some flowery detail, reflecting Froebel's saying, that the field had been his school-room and the tree his tutor. The figures are all dressed in mediæval costume, that they may never grow out of date; and each picture is so replete with detail, each tiny stroke in farthest corner so full of meaning, that they repay long and careful study. The verses may be translated and retranslated into all the tongues of earth; the songs may be set and reset in newer musical fashion; but the pictures can never be drawn again, for the hand that guided the artist's is forever still.

The drawbacks to the Mother Play are com-

monly considered to be merely those that have already been mentioned, the imperfection of the original verses and music; both of these objections having now been removed, for English-speaking people at least, in the various translations. Mr. Courthope Bowen also finds that ¹ "there is no definite arrangement or sequence in the book," which seems rather too broad a generalization, the songs moving as a whole, and with few exceptions, from a definite beginning to a definite end. He also says that in a few cases the allegorical interpretations are much too fanciful and far-fetched, which is sometimes true, though an enthusiast may be pardoned for thinking that these "far-fetched interpretations" are sometimes most suggestive, and worth the trouble of the fetching.

Miss Blow also speaks of the "lapses into artificial symbolism" which Froebel sometimes makes, and this charge has some foundation. Nevertheless, to all students of the Mother Play, and to none more than to the two authors just quoted, the book, as Thomas à Kempis said of another subject, is "a mirror of life and a volume of holy doctrine." Froebel said: "Accept the book in a kindly and thoughtful spirit; study the plays; study especially the pictures. Be not too critical of the form of the one, or of the artistic merit of

¹ H. Courthope Bowen. *Froebel and Education by Self-Activity*, chap. iv.

Drawbacks
to the
Mother
Play.

the other. *Remember that the aim and spirit of the book are novel, and that I am breaking a path through unexplored regions of experience.*¹ My success must necessarily be partial and imperfect. Nevertheless, I hope to make clear to you truths which you have felt, but have not apprehended; which you have therefore often misinterpreted in your actions, and which at best you have applied in a detached and hence ineffectual form. If my book lifts your hidden impulses into the light of consciousness, and teaches you so to relate your actions as to make them truly educative, you will not be critical of its literary shortcomings."²

Purposes in writing Mother Play. Froebel's purposes in writing the Mother Play seem, in his own words, to have been twofold, — "to lift the hidden impulses of the mother into the light of consciousness," and to teach her "to recognize in the period of earliest childhood the germ of all later life." To accomplish these two objects he makes use of the symbolism of the material universe, that it may help the child

"To find those verities within himself

Of which all outward things are but the type; "

and he also enlists in his service one of the deepest-rooted faculties of the child, — that of imitation; saying, in the motto to the "Weather Vane: "—

¹ These italics are our own. — K. D. W. and N. A. S.

² Friedrich Froebel, *Mother Play*, tr. by Susan E. Blow, p. 63.

"A stranger 'midst the surging life of men,
He to his own life-stature shall attain
By taking — to give back again."

By beginning the child's educational training at the very opening of life, Froebel appeals to those inborn presentiments of truth which awaken before articulate language is understood, and this procedure he bases on the belief — psychologically a correct one — that, "by assuming insight in the child, insight will be earlier awakened than by training."¹

Thus, through the experiences of the various plays, the book "accomplishes its double purpose of revealing the onward march of reason in the manifestations of childhood, and of holding up the ideals of reason to childish imagination and affection."²

This simple talk upon the Mother Play is only intended to serve as an introduction to the book, our hope being that it may awaken the general reader and the student just beginning kindergarten work to a desire to learn for themselves more of the philosophy which it embodies. We shall attempt here no classification nor analysis of the plays, confining ourselves to an expression of what in our opinion should be the use of the book by child and kindergartner.

How to use
the Mother
Play with
Children.

¹ W. Preyer, *The Mind of the Child*, Part I., p. 345.

² Susan E. Blow.

The claims of the Mother Play to be considered unique are verified by the fact that it is the only children's picture-book which contains food for the mother as well. As she shows the child the pictures, or holds the book that he may study them, she catches a shining thought herself which changes the whole color of her day. It is the apparent insignificance of little tasks and daily duties which make them so joyless and so monotonous. When we have once perceived that they are but bits fitted into a life-mosaic, then patience grows for the completion of the pattern. For the nursery, however, as well as for the kindergarten, the larger-sized separate pictures (colored and uncolored) issued lately in connection with Miss Blow's translation of the Mother Play¹ seem to us far more useful, as they admit of study by a group of children together, and thus increase the general interest. It is surprising how well these simple pictures are loved by the little ones, and how long they will pore over their significant details ; yet the stores of thought which they open up to the infant mind have hitherto in many cases been quite neglected, for the size of the pictures, and the one copy of the book possessed by the kindergartner have been inadequate for more than one or two children at a time.

All the games played in the kindergarten to-day are of course founded upon those in the "Mutter

¹ D. Appleton & Co.

und Kose-Lieder," though it must be confessed that now and then one is seen which seems to have wandered far from the original type. Froebel did not, of course, desire that the same words and thoughts given in his plays should always be used : we are at liberty to compose innumerable new songs, so long as we adhere to the ideal standard of play which he laid down. Since, however, each little game in the book illustrates a typical phase of the child's development, we should aim to present all these (or others built upon them) to the child's experience at some time before he leaves the kindergarten.

Froebel said in regard to the use of the Mother Play by the child : " As a child's book, it preserves a too easily-forgotten past, and endows the early years of life with continuity. This mission can be fulfilled only as song, story, and picture are vivified by your thought and warmed by your heart. When, therefore, your child has entered upon that stage of development wherein thought mounts from object to picture, and in the picture discerns the symbol, use this book, so that it may preserve for him the first tender buds of thought and experience, and help him to conceive his life, not in the isolation of its particular acts, but in the unity of its process. By so doing you will bridge the gulf between the unconscious and conscious periods of life." ¹

¹ Friedrich Froebel, *Mother Play* (tr. by Susan E. Blow), pp. 63, 64.

The prime use of the Mother Play to kindergarten and mother — to teacher, too, and in fact to all women — is, in our opinion, to “freshen in ourselves the sentiment of the ideal.” When we are a little skeptical and pessimistic, when we are distrustful of ourselves and our powers, when we are cynical as to the possibilities of the children in our care and weary at their slow development, — when, in fact, everything looks dusky and the sky of life seems to shut down on us like a box-lid, — then it is that the Mother Play streams in upon our souls as a fresh breeze through prison bars. How can one be distrustful of a humanity whose ultimate perfection this gentle optimist sketches in such convincing words? How can we weary when he tells us that we may

Use of
Mother Play
by Kinder-
gartner and
Mother.

“Step by step lift bad to good;
Without halting, without rest,
Lifting Better up to Best?”

We may be accused of over-enthusiasm in the way in which we regard the book, but there seem to be some subjects over which enthusiasm is justifiable and necessary. We are conscious of so much more that might have been said of its worth to the student and the thinker, we know so much more than we have intimated of the way in which it “illuminates the present and forecasts the future,” that our words seem cold and constrained in comparison with what we might have written.

But in order that it may have the right spiritual and mental effect upon the student, in order that the truths it preaches may be worked out practically with the children, it must be read and reread as many times as the Scripture commands us to forgive our brother. It must become a part of life, a key to its lesson-book, and its sermons be strengthened by all that we can bring to it from the world's treasures of art and literature and music.

Then, as we have truly lived it in, so shall we truly live it out again, for inseparable from the gaining of spiritual treasure is the desire to share it with others.

MORAL TRAINING

“ Truth is within ourselves ; it takes no rise
From outward things, whate’er you may believe,
There is an inmost centre in us all,
Where truth abides in fullness ; and around,
Wall upon wall, the gross flesh hems it in,
This perfect, clear perception. . . .

. . . And, to know,

Rather consists in opening out a way
Whence the imprisoned splendor may escape,
Than in effecting entry for a light
Supposed to be without.”

ROBERT BROWNING.

HE who cannot, like Froebel, see in every child
the possibility of a perfect man, should
never take upon himself the office of
educator. To undertake the development of the
mind and soul of man at any age, requires a high
and steadfast courage, an exhaustless patience,
and a trust in the eternal verities which floods
cannot drown, nor many waters quench. And it
is because so much of the teacher’s work is done
in the dark, because he is toiling for the future
largely, that this patience and this trust are
needed. He knows what he is striving to accom-
plish ; he knows something of the forces with
which he is working, and of the methods of setting

The Faith of
the Teacher.

those forces in motion : but commonly his fate is like that of one who, after painfully digging an inlet for the sea, may never hear the lapping of the waters, nor see the wave's white crest as it breaks upon his lands. Yet must he work well, hopefully, manfully, confident that

“ While the tired wave, vainly breaking,
Seems here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.”

That to develop the perfect man whose possibilities lie in every child is the aim of education, there can be no question, ^{The Perfect Man.} there has been no question since time began, though the ideals of full-orbed perfection have varied from race to race, from age to age, and the means of reaching that perfection been still more varied. No system worthy to be called education has ever seriously proposed to itself to develop any one side of the child's nature at the expense of the others, — to produce a vigorous body, a strong and disciplined mind, or a pure flame of spirit alone ; and when any such results have been attained they have been due to an error of judgment in selecting methods, or to a lack of conscious realization of the end in view, rather than to any determined purpose.

No system of child-training which ignores the spiritual nature of the child can ever be successful ; it can never lead to right results, for it has

started from wrong premises. Its foundation and its framework show an utter lack of comprehension of the being of man, and a dullness of perception in the builders so great as of itself to predict failure. The soul needs culture, the will needs training, even more than the mind needs unfolding, or the body development ; for the moral aim in education is, after all, the absolute one, and all the other things are to be added unto it.

Yet this moral training, in our estimation, has nothing to do with forms or creeds or traditions ; for again we believe with Froebel that a child naturally guided needs no positive ecclesiastical form, “because the lovingly cared-for and thereby steadily and strongly developed human life, also the cloudless child’s life, is of itself a Christlike one.”

We need devote no time to painting the evils which grow from an education addressed to the mind alone. The howls resound through history of the relentless human wolves who, trained in mind but devoid of soul, have preyed upon their fellow-beings. No danger so great can menace a country as that of rearing a race of Frankensteins, gifted with acute mental powers, but lacking in all the spiritual qualities. We willingly grant that we cannot be altogether successful in producing these monsters, even should we wish to do so ; for here the great Schoolmaster of all guards us from the consequences of our own errors, and will not leave the

Mental
Training
alone.

human soul entirely at the mercy of human teaching. This is true, and we are blessed in the knowledge; but we shall do well, in examining the products of our modern systems of education, to assure ourselves that they have not a certain Frankenstein quality about them, for in truth much of our schooling has little to do with the awakening of soul-life.

This spiritual training should begin with the birth of the child (yes! and long before), and Froebel's philosophy is rich Early Impressions. with suggestions for the mother as to the methods by which it may best be carried on. It should be begun when the spirit is most receptive, most impressionable, when the mother is in closest communion with the child, and before the influences of the outside world begin to rush in upon the sensitive spirit. Such soul-impressions, early given, will indeed be "treasures inly stored away."

"Into their forms, like dew into the flower,
The Lord instills his vivifying power,
And blessings they become forever;
States of the mind which perish never;
But, losing every tint of sadness
Return with multiplying gladness;
Germs of eternal happiness
Which never cease to grow and bless;
Strength for the seasons of temptation,
Means of eventual renovation,
The bonds which link us to the angels most, —
The light which may be hidden, but never can be lost." ¹

¹ W. H. Holcombe, *Ode to Infancy*.

Long before the child understands articulate words, tones, looks, smiles, and inarticulate sounds are clear to him, and it is in these earliest months that he most needs to be encompassed with a pure spiritual atmosphere. Froebel says : —

“Think not that he is all too young to teach :
His little heart will like a magnet reach
And touch the truth for which you find no speech.”

So, as the mother sits beside him, as she tends him and plays with him, in her word and song and action she relates his physical manifestations to the spiritual reality which lies behind them. What does it matter that words are as yet uncomprehended? Heart-language and soul-language are independent of conventions of speech, and these are all-sufficient to create those “faint and delicate yet decided and enduring emotions” which Froebel calls *presentiments*, and which he declares to be the preparation for later spiritual development.

These *presentiments* are of greatest use to us when the child has reached the kindergarten age, but even if his home influences have been negative, or positively bad, we need not despair, for the Lord is mindful of his own, and we have the assurance of our dear optimist, Elizabeth Peabody, that no child can get so far astray in his first seven years but that the shepherdess may in one month bring him back to the paths of pleasantness and peace. Yet this

Later
Training.

cannot be true, or even measurably true, unless the shepherdess be a wise one, and one of her first duties must be to lead him to obedience; for "the three stages of education of the individual and of the race are: rules, habits, principles."¹ The rules of the kindergarten are scarcely to be called so, perhaps, in any strict sense of the word; they are rather unconscious ethical formulations, the crystallization of public sentiment in this or that direction. The child is never told upon entering the kindergarten that he may not do certain things, for why suggest to him a course of action that might never of itself have occurred to him? If he be a normal child, with the average home-training, he will be likely to do as he sees others doing, and insensibly to turn his moral weathercock to suit the prevailing winds. When he shows signs of intending transgression, it is time for warning; and when he has transgressed, then let retribution (in the form of natural consequence) swiftly descend. We cannot claim that the necessity of obedience has been invariably impressed upon our kindergarten children; in fact, one of our commonest failings has been just here, that, in trying to give the child's individuality free development, we have forgotten that the highest life must still be submissive to law. It should be remembered, however, as a partial explanation of our failures, that the ideal kinder-

Obedience.

¹ Horatio Stebbins, D. D.

garten discipline is rather a delicate and difficult thing to maintain, — trembling in the balance, as it must, between the military drill of the school and the joyous freedom of the nursery. Still we must not let this difficulty, great as it may be, serve to our own souls as an excuse for disobedience in our children; nor must we persuade ourselves that we show our love by allowing license, for no better preparation for life can be given to any child than the habit of prompt, cheerful obedience to sensible restraint, to wholesome authority and wise, overruling law. He who has never learned to obey can never be trusted to rule, and, least of all, to rule over his own spirit. It is our task in the nursery and in the kindergarten gently to lead the children into “those blind but holy habits which make goodness easy,” and obedience is one of the best of those habits.

Another valuable element in moral training is the cultivation of the spirit of reverence,
 Reverence. and the kindergarten offers us wide opportunities in this direction. Our nature-work, our care of plants and animals, is most helpful here; for who can study the mysteries of the universe, who can meditate on its beauties, without feeling that

“Not unrelated, unaffied,
 But to each thought and thing allied,
 Is perfect Nature’s every part,
 Rooted in the mighty Heart.”

Our stories, too, as they tell of brave deeds, of kind and helpful actions, of sweet and tender thoughts for others, teach the child to reverence the spirit of God as seen in man, and thus by linking together the life of nature, the life of man, the life of God, we cultivate the threefold reverence of which Goethe speaks in the "Pedagogic Province." This is what Froebel means when he says: "I wish to cultivate men who stand rooted in nature with their feet in God's earth, whose heads reach toward and look into the heavens, whose hearts unite the richly formed life of earth and nature and the purity and peace of heaven, — God's earth and God's heaven."

Knowing that the pictures of our childhood furnish most of our imagery of celestial things, we should strive to put within Effect of
Pictures. the reach of our children really worthy representations of sacred subjects. Grotesque or horrible pictures of fiends or devils become indelibly impressed on the mind, and are sometimes so feared as to become a source of nervous disorders; while even the image which the child calls up of God himself is commonly a mixture of confused impressions reproduced from random pictures seen in the street, on posters, or in shop windows. Since the child must needs invest all the celestial beings he hears of with human form, it follows that the only wise plan is to fill his mind with beautiful images, which will preclude the possi-

bility of his fashioning for himself impossible and hideous figures, such as were used to represent the gods in early stages of religion. Children invariably delight in the countless beautiful pictures of the Madonna and Child, which artists have so loved to paint, and in the groups of gentle, tender cherubs and battalions of winged spirits, with whom they seem to feel a certain kinship, and about whom they so delight to talk. (Such pictures need no explanations from older people; their spiritual suggestions will of themselves sink into the mind.

The work with concrete things in the kindergarten is so carried on as to give a decided help in moral training. The child soon learns that upon the exactness with which he folds his papers depends the beauty of his completed form; that his design with the sticks is never pleasing unless a certain law has been followed in its making; that his blocks must be laid straight or his tower falls; and from this relation of "rightness" to use and beauty in tangible objects, the truth is and must be carried over into the mind and applied to spiritual things. The inevitable relation of cause and effect, so perfectly illustrated with the kindergarten gifts and occupations; the certain loss that follows mistake; the calm impersonality of retribution close following upon error, — all these are strong, wise teachers for the child, though the lessons they set are often hard to learn.

Accuracy of
Action and
Speech.

The ideal kindergartner, too, strives for an equal accuracy in observation and expression. The child may not see much, but he must see it for himself, and tell of his discovery in as clear language as his small vocabulary affords. He knows next to nothing from the intellectual point of view; but what he does know, as it has been learned in the way best fitted for his mind, is his absolute possession, which he can use to advantage. From all this precision, accuracy, and exactness, — this outward order, — it seems only reasonable to expect the inward clearness which Froebel predicted, and which it seems to us that we find in a well-ordered kindergarten.

Then there are the songs and games which sow the seeds of a wonderful harvest of virtue. Their music produces a definite spiritual impression; their words inculcate love and reverence for man, for nature, and for God; and the way in which they are played opens a series of windows in the child's soul through which "the imprisoned splendor may escape." Would you let the light of self-abnegation and self-sacrifice shine out? Here is a window fitted for it. Shall the consciousness of organic unity stream forth? Why, here are crystal panes just made to suit it, set around the soul like the windows in a light-house tower. Indeed, one can scarcely think of one of the virtues which may not be developed by the kindergarten games,

Effect of
Songs and
Games.

— unless it may be that of prudence, which is, after all, too near akin to worldly wisdom to be altogether appropriate to childhood.

Finer and more valuable, however, than any other lesson of virtue thus unconsciously learned is the pure feeling of universal brotherhood which is engendered, a feeling which, once awakened, can never again be rocked to sleep, and which will grow into a very giant of love and helpfulness to fellow-men.

The kindergarten day always begins with a prayer, said or sung, — one which only
 Morning Prayers and Silences. voices love and gratitude, reverence and aspiration, and so is appropriate for any creed and for any religion which looks up to God as the power that ruleth all and worketh in all. Then often follows what in our minds is a truly precious season for spiritual influences, — a brief space of time, only a moment perhaps, when the children cover their eyes and “think about being good,” as they say. No one tells them just what they shall ponder, no one asks their thoughts or knows if they think at all; but a sacred quiet descends, the soul retreats into itself, and the spirit of the Lord pervades the tender silence.

When this quiet moment is over, and before the merriment of song and play begin, the
 Morning Talks. kindergartner has a wonderful opportunity for an appropriate verse, or a few earnest words that will sink into the children’s hearts;

but let her be sure that she really has something to say, and something that comes from the fullness of life within her, lest she trouble the waters of that "childish unconsciousness" which is "rest in God." It is a difficult thing, in fact it is a dangerous thing, to talk to little children about religion at all, unless you know just how little and how wisely to speak. The Rev. Heber Newton says: "Glib garrulity about God is the vice of most religious teaching (falsely so called), the bungling job-work of spiritual tyros who never should be set upon so fine a task as the culture of the soul."

From our own reverence, our own love and worship and aspiration, our own faith expressed in common things, the child gets his practical knowledge of God, and none of these things are advanced, but rather retarded, by talking about them. Let his spiritual attitude toward his Maker be no subject for your interference; it is in better hands than yours: but do you concern yourself with his obedience to the inner law of right, which should grow more and more clear as the restraints of authority are withdrawn.

The essence of moral and religious training lies, after all, — does it not? — in cultivating in the soul a love of righteousness, and in so developing and strengthening the will that it is able to follow after and attain, in some measure at least, what it most desires.

The ideal kindergarten discipline is addressed toward this will-training, and the woman who uses the system and its appliances to produce a capricious, impatient, unsteady, rebellious child, such as one sometimes sees in kindergartens, has committed a trebly unpardonable sin; for it is one against God, against the child, and against his interpreter, Froebel. How high, how pure, were Froebel's views on the spiritual training of children can hardly be known, save by those who are thoroughly familiar with his writings. Those who, like the most enthusiastic and devoted kindergartners, have read and re-read the "Mother Play," the "Education of Man," the "Reminiscences," the "Autobiography" and the two volumes of "Letters," are so permeated with Froebelian philosophy that they find all life irradiated by his insights. And this is the man whose kindergarten was once called an infidel institution; he who said, "We have to open the eyes of our children, that they may learn to know the Creator in his creations. Only when they have found or divined God as the Creator, through visible things, will they learn to understand the 'Word of God,'—God in spirit and in truth,—and be able to become Christians. First is the visible world, then the invisible truth,—the idea."

In spite of all that has been said about kindergartens, in spite of all the authority we have for knowing that they are blessed things for the chil-

dren, there are those who persist in thinking that the work is not worth the money spent upon it, even where the amount needed is reduced to a minimum. It is not much wonder that people who take no pains to study the subject conclude that it is of little importance. The true and valuable results lie deep. They cannot be written on blackboards, nor brought home by the children on slips of paper, nor can a child tell what he has learned. The results of kindergarten training are found in the tendency of the head and heart; they become manifest in the mode of thinking and feeling; they grow stronger and more beautiful with the child. We are all giving keener scrutiny of late to our educational methods. We question now, as we did not once, whether our mental tools get as thoroughly tempered and sharpened as they should. There is a great satisfaction in noting this dissatisfaction, but we need a yet nobler discontent. This reforming instinct has mostly to do with what we call the intellect, for habit has more effectually blinded us to our ways of dealing with that far more subtle something we call spirit, or soul, or character. Exclusive training of the intellect produces but an ant-life of planning, storing, and digging. We do consider her ways too literally, yet are not wise. Read the faces of many of our leading citizens. You can find energy, shrewdness, cold, keen positiveness and deter-

Results of
Kindergar-
ten Train-
ing.

mined egotism there. We admire the hard sense of these our "able men," but there is after all a suggestion of spiritual poverty in the type. We complain of the prevalence of dishonesty, immorality, intemperance; we mourn that we dare not appeal to conscience or a fine sense of honor, for the world's question is not "Is it right?" but "Will it pay?" and we are in despair at this coarseness of moral fibre.

These are very close and serious questions to all of us, and thoughtful men and women must see that our alteratives do not go deep enough. A disease of the frame-work needs something more than patent liniments for external application. It is character-forming that we need in home, school, and in Sunday-school and church work too. There is too much "saying of lessons," both in school and Sunday-school. The kindergarten principle of learning through doing is too much in the background. This mere saying of rules and tables by tiny little ones, yes, and even this mere saying of texts and psalms, is only a fractional part of the learning how to live consciously with God, for God, with humanity, for humanity. The wisest Sunday-school work is still a training in theories only, unless before and with it there is moral development in action.

"A soft answer turneth away wrath;" "Charity thinketh no evil," — we know these beautiful

precepts well by memory, by head, — alas, how imperfectly by heart!

Look in frequently at almost any good kindergarten; see the unostentatious, quiet work, the developed spirit of helpfulness, which is its practical religion; help from teacher to child, from child to teacher; from younger to older, and from older to younger children, — and remember that to help is to do the work of the world.

Look at the bright faces, busy fingers, happy voices, beaming smiles. The children are as merry as crickets, as full of song as birds, as busy as bees, and virtue kindles at the touch of such joy. One can never look at them without feeling that if the same love and guidance were given to them throughout their childhood days, and the same union of artistic, ennobling work and mental activity enjoyed, they might grow into men and women who would regard idleness as vice, ignorance as degradation, and persistent despair as a crime; whose awakened minds would, with increasing enthusiasm, increase in knowledge and power; whose trained wills would know the joy of striving; and whose hearts would enter with delight into each fresh experience of life. If the kindergartner be a good, pure, loving, earnest woman, into whose heart the love of God has fallen to quicken all true and beautiful thoughts and motives, she can no more help making her four hours' daily work with the children a constant

preaching of the gospel than the sun can help radiating light and heat. *

But the conclusion of the whole matter is just here; no woman can create such an atmosphere as this, no woman can be the priestess of this essential religion in the child stage, unless the fire of worship be ever burning on the altars of her own soul. Emerson, who is always divinely right about these things, says: "The will of the pure runs down from them into other natures, as water runs down from a higher into a lower vessel. This natural force is no more to be withstood than any other natural force."

We heard an address given by a Hindu monk, not long ago, and as we listened we could not but marvel at the universality of truth, and be thankful that there is no Here or There to the workings of the spirit. Often certain things the Oriental said appealed especially to us as individuals, and, again the words seemed to have a general meaning and we thought of kindergartners everywhere. One sentence, in its poetic, Eastern phrasing, its newly jeweled setting of a truth as old as time, was this: "Let the lotos of your life bloom; the bees will come of themselves."

Did we hear anything after this? We are not sure, for our minds were filled with the thought of life and its lotos-flower as it opened to the sunshine,—of how, deep down at its golden heart, was the treasure that drew the

Conclusion
of the
Matter.

The Lotos
of Life.

bees, and of how no words were needed to tell the place of the honey, for in its silent sweetness the flower revealed its own secret. And as

" the atoms march in tune . . .
When they hear from far the rune,"

so these musings fell into orderly train as our minds reverted to their old, old reflections upon the influence of the teacher's personality. They are old thoughts, old to us, old to you, old in literature, for every moralist, sage, and philosopher has held them since time began; but though a truth be old it can never be worn out till it has served its purpose, and in no stage of education has the unconscious influence of the teacher been held, as yet, of sufficient account.

It must be a silent, an unconscious influence, the sweetness of the lotos that attracts the bees, and like that sweetness it must come from the golden heart. The kindergartner must, of course, be intellectually equipped at every point; she must know the theory which underlies the use of the kindergarten tools, and be able to handle them wisely; she must understand the secrets of play and of story-telling; she must know something of the laws of the mind and its workings: but she may possess all this knowledge and yet have a heart so dry and withered that not one drop of life-giving honey will distill from it. More fatal supposition still, there may be a drop of poison in

the flower-cup, — only one, perhaps, but that is enough for the undoing of the child.

We may not undervalue knowledge, high mental gifts, power of discipline, executive ability, nor accomplishments in education; but back of all these things there must be the power of the teacher's strong, true personality, or the mental attainments will be so much Dead Sea fruit to the child. In later years, when the habits of the spirit are crystallized, the character of the teacher is of less importance, but in nursery and kindergarten it is the one supremely and infinitely serious thing. "Life-earnestness is the gift of gifts, and the inspired work of the true teacher knows no bounds except those which God's horizons and laws of spiritual gravitation impose. She who is always at her best, being and doing the best that then and there in her lies, with no suggestion of stint and every unconscious suggestion of love, of solicitude, of self-sacrifice, is giving off virtue from her very garment's hem."

We can accomplish little in any line of educational or philanthropic work unless we are constantly adding to the riches of our personality, unless we are ourselves what we wish our children to become. No one may tell another how he may reinforce his spiritual strength; no one may tell another how he may paint the lotos of his life with brighter hues, or add to its store of sweetness; yet we know where the roots of the plant

are set, and as they struggle deeper down into the dark soil, so will the flower above grow fairer. Yet not for itself alone does the lotos blossom, — for the sake of the eager bees it must expand all its infolded perfections.

THE SCHOOL OF SPEUSIPPUS

ART IN THE SCHOOL-ROOM

“Were it left to my ordering, I should paint the school with the pictures of joy and gladness, Flora and the Graces, as the philosopher Speusippus did his. Where their profit is, let them there have their pleasure also.”

MICHEL, SEIGNEUR DE MONTAIGNE.

Schools of
our Child-
hood.

WHEN you give your hand to Memory, and retrace with her the softly-shadowed paths that vanish into darkness, do you find anywhere upon your journey a school like that of Speusippus? In the many wayside inns that dotted the road of Education, was there one where the pictures of joy and gladness, of Flora and the Graces, were painted on the walls? We recall distinctly our earliest school-rooms, one in the country, one in the city, and we are inclined to believe that they will be found to bear a strong family resemblance to your own. The first one in the country had the usual stove, and serpentine lengths of melancholy pipe, the teacher's rostrum, bell, and blackboard; seats and desks once white, now of no particular color, and marked with many strange carvings and hieroglyphs. Was there any further furnishing? No, we think

not ; but stay, — yes, there was a tin water-pail and dipper. Our bodies were certainly not enfeebled by useless luxuries, for the windows had no shades and the walls no decoration, save spiders' webs, dust, and cracks. The children must have been the only ornament, save, perhaps, the teachers, who, if our memory serves us, were not always satisfactory in this regard. Yet there was a deliciously green outlook from those windows ; vagrant breezes, full of perfume, strayed in now and then ; and playtimes filled with grass and flowers and the song of the river were always in prospect.

The city school was less dusty, the seats and desks in better condition, the walls much cleaner ; but it was equally bare of beautiful things, much crowded, and the atmosphere oppressive to a too-early-susceptible nose ; there was nothing worth seeing from the windows ; and the same air of grim devotion to duty, of laying aside every weight and pressing toward the mark, was distinctly to be felt.

Yet this idea of a school-room, of a place where young minds are to be developed, is obviously the creation of man's brain, and runs counter to God's practices. He evidently believes in beauty as an educator, and did He not begin the training of man in a garden ? The popular belief, on the contrary, seems always to have been that school is a place to con one's

God's
School-
room.

book, and that any object in the room not strictly essential to this purpose is a beguilement of the mind and a snare to the senses. Few among the thinkers of the race have discovered until late years

“ That Beauty, Good, and Knowledge are three sisters
That dote upon each other, friends to man,
Living together under the same roof,
And never can be sundered without tears,”

and the fact that the three sisters have commonly been sundered, as far as the east is from the west, may explain the frequent failures of education to accomplish what is expected of it.

All philosophers and educators have agreed to the necessity of refining the feelings and training the taste of children, and have suggested a variety of roads toward this end. Plato, for instance, advised the teaching of poetry and music; Aristotle, of music and drawing; Quintilian, music and the memorizing of gems of literature; Comenius, music, poetry, and games; Rousseau, drawing, reciting, and singing; Pestalozzi, music, dancing, etc.; and Froebel, form, color, music, and the occupations, gifts, and games of the kindergarten: while all have agreed that courtesies must be taught, and the ethical nature early cultivated.

It is possible, however, that all these moralists, save the last, relied too much upon the ear and too little on the eye in the training of taste; and

Froebel, peculiarly susceptible to form and color in art and nature, provided liberally for these in his system of developing the æsthetic sense.

Kindergartners everywhere have recognized the close kinship of beauty to good and knowledge, and, many as have been their failures, have invariably tried, at least, to set their children in an artistic environment. That they have not always succeeded, perhaps have seldom succeeded in the ideal sense, is quite true; but the fact that to most persons the salient characteristics of the kindergarten are its coloring, its decoration, its gayety of effect, and that by these fruits is it commonly known, proves conclusively that the effort to reach the beautiful is duly recognized. Often the kindergarten rooms are not beautiful at all in the artist's sense; but why should they be, how can they be, in any country where the majority of home interiors are ugly (impious as the saying sounds); where the exteriors are often equally unpleasing; where the public buildings are frequently without pretensions to architectural taste; and where, in many places, no museums of beautiful things are to be found? There remain only the beauties of nature as educators, and it seems to be invariably true, and reflects the development of the race, that "man must be won to the love and appreciation of nature by the interpretation of art."

The stream cannot rise higher than its source.

Kindergar-
ten Decora-
tion.

and we must remember, when we criticise the decorations of our kindergartens, that these are and must be on the level of the common taste, and that the fact that any need whatever is felt of making them beautiful is an earnest of better things and a hint of Utopian conditions to come.

The first two requisites of an artistic school-room are, in our opinion, cleanness and order; and here we must be forgiven if we speak emphatically and in a loud voice, for the blood of generations of Puritan ancestors surges (nay, the word is ill-chosen), marches in our veins. The presence of Luca della Robbia's Singing Boys upon the walls would not compensate us for an inch thickness of dust upon the tables, and not all the glories of the Sistine Madonna could blind us to the condition of the closet shelves. True, those shelves are behind a closed door, but their helter-skelter, topsy-turvy, hit-or-miss condition is an outward and visible sign of the inward and spiritual condition of their owner. Be clean first, be orderly next (in the school-room, at least), and after that be artistic, for it is against every dictate of common sense to frost the cake before you bake it, or to trim the dress before you sew the seams. We have said many times, and now repeat it, though the sentiment is somewhat out of fashion, that the ideal kindergartner must be a good housekeeper; and why should this not

Cleanness
and Order.

be so, when we know that she must first be the ideal woman?

Allied, in the training of taste, to the neatness of the room, is the dress of the teacher, Dress of the Teacher. and neatness here does not presuppose a gentlemanly severity of costume. One may be neat and yet artistically and becomingly clad; and children delight in bright, pure colors, in pretty ribbons and aprons, and in breast-knots of flowers. The natural heart of man, and of woman, for that matter, chooses rather to contemplate a blossoming rose-tree than a granite wall; and though the wall is undeniably useful, the teacher need not emulate its blankness and angularity in her dress, nor does she thereby indicate a whit more clearly her moral rectitude of purpose. Who has not seen the admiring eyes of children riveted upon a pretty gown, felt the appreciative pat and stroke of small hands upon its folds, and the awed inquiry on its first appearance, "Is that your Sunday dress, teacher?" and who has not reveled in this infantile admiration, and joyed in being beautiful in those innocent eyes?

There is a word to be said here, in free kindergarten work at least, in regard to the neatness of the children. Neatness of Children. Certainly we ought to influence the mother to keep her child presentable; certainly, for water is cheap, we ought to insist that he be sent clean in the morning; but if his face and hands are grimy when we

are giving pictures to study, or bright papers to handle, shall we allow him to conduct his artistic experiments in this condition? Scrubbing neglected children is not an agreeable task, perhaps, but the woman who is too good for it is far too good for kindergarten work, in our judgment. It is the mother's duty, of course; but if she has not yet been brought to see it clearly, why, do it yourself; and take as a reward the smiles and the roses that follow, with a sigh of gratitude that only exposed surfaces are your portion.

When the kindergarten room is clean and orderly; when vigorous plants are growing in the windows; when, if conditions admit, it is adorned with a few flowers in simple, well-chosen vases, — it is time to think of wall decorations. This talk is not upon hygiene, so we need not discuss the respective merits, in regard to health, of painting, tinting, or papering; but the covering of the walls must of course be suitable to the exposure of the room, and favorable to the children's eyes, before its value as a background is considered. We know, however, that this background must be somewhat soft and subdued in its tones and composition, or we can have no effect from the decorations. These are the pictures, which may be called the permanent decorations, and the chains, leaves, boughs, dried grasses, flags, etc., which are (or should be) temporary ones. There is no value in these last

Wall
Decoration.

adornments unless they be put up to mark some special occasion, and removed *before* they are faded, dusty, withered, and forlorn. Among other objectionable decorations sometimes seen upon the walls, one cannot too forcibly condemn the advertising and Christmas cards fastened up with pins, or stuck in a rack. These are often charmingly pretty in themselves, but give the effect of a "decalcomanious rash" when used to cover wall-spaces. Let them be packed away in boxes, or pasted in scrap-books, and the children will really enjoy and profit by them when they can thus be studied at short range.

The value of suitable pictures to the developing faculties of the child is so inestimably great that a book might be written on Pictures. that subject alone, for in the last analysis it would reduce itself to the effect upon the soul of the contemplation of the beautiful. "The keen sense of beauty cannot be gained except in childhood, and can be gained then only by familiarity with beautiful things," and the immortal Speusippus worked upon this knowledge when he painted his school with Flora and the Graces.

We must remember, in selecting pictures, that they make both an intellectual and an æsthetic appeal, and that the former alone will not serve us with young children. The subjects should be within the experience of little people, and deal with the higher regions of that experience: they

should be suggestive, supplying material for stories; the drawing and composition should be really good, and the coloring rich and pure, not gaudy. Of course, kindergarten children greatly prefer the colored pictures, but they are much more difficult to find in satisfactory treatment than the black and white reproductions.

Not only should the pictures be well selected, well drawn, and well colored, but they should be large, if they are intended for the walls, and they should be hung low. What profit does a child get from the most exquisite work of art if it be only seven by nine inches, and suspended so high up that he cannot look at it without injury to the cervical vertebræ? We have found a dado of pictures running entirely around the room, at the head of the wainscoting, a very pleasing decoration, and the wainscoting itself, if of Japanese matting, or of wood painted in a suitable color, is both effective and durable. The Marcus Ward Illustrated Library of Animals is suitable for such a dado, and so are many of the long panels of birds and flowers which have come in late years with the various periodicals, and can be bought in large quantities for a comparatively small sum. The baby kindergarten room at Hull House¹ has Walter Crane's "Flora's Feast" (ah! couldst thou see it, Speusippus!) hung low along its softly tinted walls in a series of long

¹ Chicago, Illinois.

paneled white frames, and thus the pages which so exquisitely symbolize the spring and summer flowers have an ideal binding and a permanent abiding-place.

Frames, however, are not essential to these dados, for they may be papered directly on the walls and headed with a narrow moulding. We remember one ideal nursery whose smooth walls of softest chocolate were adorned with a dado of colored pictures from fairy tales on a background of dull gold, and we have sighed ever since for a kindergarten room like it. It should be a remote, secluded apartment, hid from the cold eyes of visiting Gradgrinds, of rigid martinetts of school discipline, and of hard unbelievers in fairy lore, and there we would sit with the children and revel in the charms of *Graciosa* and *Percinet*, of *Cinderella* and the *Sleeping Beauty*, of *Puss in Boots*, and *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

The pictures seen in kindergartens do not always represent the taste of the presiding spirit, we are glad to say. They are often mere make-shifts, purchased from small resources, and conceded to be a shade better than nothing. They are sometimes, too (and these are the worst), gifts from kind patrons of limited artistic intelligence. These should always be accepted; for if we do not encourage people in the beginning to give away what they do not want, they will never rise to the spiritual height of making a sacrifice

and giving what they really prize themselves. The necessity of acceptance is conceded, but the gifts may be hung high, or in dusky corners ; and we have always noticed that in due course of time fatal accidents happen to such pictures, the frames, if good ones, being commonly saved, as if by miracle.

Trivial, purposeless, badly drawn and colored pictures are sometimes, too, the only fruit of despairing search after something really good, and are hung because nothing better could be found by the kindergartner, whose acquirements in art were not profound. It is only of late years that the public school art leagues and societies, the art students' associations, etc., have been formed, and have directed their attention particularly to school-decoration, and thus it is only lately that any general and easily accessible help could be obtained as to appropriate pictures.

Now, however, the various circulating picture galleries, managed in England by such associations as the Manchester Art Museum and the Kyrle Society, and in this country by Hull House (Chicago), and the Friendly Aid House (New York), all offer helpful suggestions as to masterpieces of art suitable for children, and some of the public school art leagues publish printed lists of pictures adapted to the different school grades.

There seems no reason why the kindergartens in any city might not have a circulating picture

gallery of their own: a fund, to which all would contribute, might be devoted to the purchase of a few really good pictures and casts, and these might be circulated throughout the year among the different kindergartens, remaining in each a month or a fortnight, as might be desirable. If simply and durably framed they would last a long time, and each room might have an easel, or special wall space, devoted to their exhibition. So, like

Circulating
Picture Gal-
leries for
Kinder-
gartens.

. . . "the sweet presence of a good diffused,
And in diffusion ever more intense,"

they would gladden a whole circle of hearts, when, if they were the possession of one kindergarten alone, they could only have touched a tiny arc of that circle. They would probably, too, be the more prized and noticed because they were birds of passage. A picture which is always hung on the wall in the same place is often looked on with an unseeing eye, and a brief absence restores its attractions. This we have found with our collections of pictures for special occasions, — for Christmas, Thanksgiving, etc., which are brought out in the week or month preceding the holiday, and then packed away.

We must remember, too, that if we wish to cultivate that taste in children which, as one prominent educator puts it, "is the flower of a happy experience," we must also use care in selecting their picture-books. Emerson

Picture-
Books.

says in his essay on "Domestic Life:—" "What art can paint or gild any object in after-life with the glow which nature gives to the first baubles of childhood! St. Peter's cannot have the magical power over us that the red-and-gold covers of our first picture-book possessed." Since the magical power confessedly is there, let us remember it when we are looking over these books for kindergarten and nursery use. They are many of them such daubs, so violent in coloring, so impossible in drawing, so "creepy" in subject, as to make one tremble for the sensitive child who comes under their influence. Only a careless, thoughtless person, however, need buy such books to-day, for the picture-book market is constantly improving, so far as artistic treatment is concerned at least. That many of them are quite perfect in technique, but destitute of sense or meaning, is true enough, and here, when patience fails, we can always fall back on the illustrations from Froebel's "Mother Play," which now may be had in large size, and both colored and uncolored.

Other Aids
in training
the Taste.

In the kindergarten we are not confined to looking at and admiring the beautiful, for Froebel devised numberless ways by which the child might produce it for himself and for his neighbor. All the hand-work furnishes opportunities for combining colors, for designing, for training the eye, for shaping and moulding, for building, for reproducing and in-

venting, and in each case the difficulties are graded, so that, step by step and easily, the child may learn the laws of beauty. The music and literature of the kindergarten, too, the teaching of manners and morals, are all aids in training the taste, for fortunately a touch on any of the fine strings of the child's nature will set all the others in vibration. Froebel Helps from Nature. advised that the first drawing and coloring work of children should "refer to perceptions of Nature," and we sometimes forget what a wonderful teacher of beauty she is when lovingly observed. Dr. Seguin says in his "Education:" "To train the taste, all the written books of the world cannot teach as much as the observation of the distribution of resistances in a nutshell, or the different attitudes of a branch of white lily from sunrise to sundown." Let us take the children to see the lily; but if that may not be, let us buy the plant for the kindergarten, and, failing even that, at least have a picture of it, though the grace of its changing attitudes be absent. In the school report of Newton, Massachusetts, for 1890, the supervisor of drawing said: "If the apple blossom and the maple leaf were from the hand of man rather than of nature; if they were duly entered according to act of Congress and stacked by the thousand in the publishers' warehouses, — we should doubtless be at great pains to include them in our educational supplies."

We often ignore these natural aids in taste-training, it is true, and bemoan ourselves because we have no money for pictures, when we have an orchard within walking distance, a maple-tree on the corner, and a dovecote next door. With these materials we may make our own pictures, if we choose, and be sure that they at least are artistically perfect in every detail.

And now, for the purpose of all this training of taste, why should it be universal, why should it be true, as Hamerton says, that it is still more important, from the intellectual point of view, that art should be understood by many than that it should be dexterously practiced by few? It seems to us, from the industrial point of view at least (and perhaps from that point we may get a glance around the corner at something else), we cannot answer the question better than by repeating a story that lately came to our ears. It was told to illustrate the effect of environment, to prove the powerful influence that surroundings may have upon human endeavor and achievement, and runs as follows. A party of women once had the privilege of inspecting a factory devoted to the manufacture of spool thread. Their guide was the proprietor of the factory, which is one of the largest and most complete in the world; but what most impressed the visitors was, not the size and evident prosperity of the plant, but the

Purpose of
Taste-Train-
ing.

beauty of the place. Not only was every hygienic and commercial necessity attended to, but, so far as possible, every aesthetic consideration was observed as well. Around each wall of the spacious, well-lighted apartments where the work was done ran a broad, exquisitely painted frieze. The figures upon it were a dainty dancing company, beautiful in color as well as in form, and fit to grace the walls of a dwelling rather than a mill. Finally, one of the women, a practical, plain-spoken dame, asked the mill-owner why he made beauty such an object. "I don't see the use of such a frieze in a factory like this," she said bluntly, — "why do you have it?" The mill-owner smiled. "Well, come to think of it, it's a very practical reason," he said. "I find that it makes better thread."

That is the answer, — answer enough from the practical standpoint; but is there not a strong hint of moral and intellectual truths behind? Will not the contemplation of the beautiful make better human thread as well as spool cotton? The more we teach children to love and admire the beautiful productions of man, the more we open their eyes to the glories of nature; the more we teach them of the joys of form and color, the more richly stored will be their minds with sources of happiness in maturity. The conception of the universe which we gain in childhood is never wholly

Spool
Thread and
Human
Thread.

changed by later impressions; and he who has early absorbed the idea that the world holds nothing but what is dark and dingy, ugly, ungraceful, and sordid, will sink his mental and moral ideals to the same level.

Therefore, O Speusippus, we praise thee for that school of thine, so cunningly painted with pictures of joy and gladness, of Flora and the Graces; and we doubt not that where thy pupils found their pleasure, there did they gain great profit also.

KINDERGARTEN PLAY

“Musical training is a more potent instrument than any other, because rhythm and harmony make their way into the secret recesses of the soul, into which they do mightily fasten.” PLATO.

“What boy and girl play in earliest childhood will become, by and by, a beautiful reality of serious life; for they expand into stronger and lovelier youthfulness by seeking on every side appropriate objects to verify the thoughts of their inmost souls.”

FRIEDRICH FROEBEL.

As one introduced to the treasures of an oriental monarch might pause first before one jewel, then another, each time exclaiming, “Ah, this is most beautiful of all!” — so, as we linger over the riches of Froebel’s means of education, we are in doubt as to where most wisely to bestow our admiration. Yet we cannot long hesitate when boldly challenged for an opinion; for life with children, and serious, sympathetic study of their manifestations, show us ever more clearly the abiding truth of Froebel’s theory of play.

The employment of music and games in the training of children is, of course, not confined to the modern kindergarten, as a brief study of the history of pedagogy will show; but the way in which, and the pur-

Use of
Games and
Music in
Education.

pose for which, they are used by Froebel, are absolutely unique.

With other educators they serve either to train the taste, to strengthen the muscles, to give appropriate physical exercise, to cultivate gracefulness and fitting poise of body, to develop the æsthetic faculties, to soften and refine the feelings, or to inculcate courtesy and politeness; with Froebel, though all these elements are present, yet they are the merest dust in the balance as compared with the fundamental values which render them, in his opinion, essential to the proper development of the child.

The theory of kindergarten play seems an absolute inspiration to the student of childhood; but it is such an inspiration as only rewards ceaseless thought and study, long and patient observation and introspection, and unwavering devotion to a high purpose. The nursery was Froebel's university and little children his professors, and it was from them he learned that "the plays of this age are the heart-leaves of the whole future life; for the whole man is visible in them, in his finest capacity, in his innermost being." To so thoroughly understand childish play as to be able to separate the various threads which enter into its complicated web, to comprehend why the child plays and what he plays, to estimate the dynamic force of the instinct, and upon this combined know-

Theory of
Kindergarten
Play.

ledge and insight to build up a system of songs and games not only suited to present needs, but directed toward future development, — this was what the founder of the kindergarten proposed to himself, and this is what he accomplished.

Kindergarten play, if conducted in agreement with the principles of Froebel, has the following values : —

It is valuable, in the first place, not so much for its effect upon the physical development as for the sake of the mental and spiritual activity it evokes.

It gives room for the earliest development of the pure social instinct, involving mutual give-and-take, and common effort toward common objects, thus forming for the child an introduction to moral relations.

Through kindergarten play, the child comes to know the external world, the physical qualities of the objects which surround him, — their motions, actions and reactions upon each other, and the relations of these phenomena to himself : a knowledge which forms the basis of that which will be his permanent stock in life.

The child's fancy is healthfully fed by images from outer life, and his curiosity by new glimpses of knowledge from the world around him.

“ This is the significance of play, which is chiefly imitation, that the undeveloped human being is learning to know himself by seeing what he can do. He is revealing himself to others and

to himself, and getting strength in his individuality.”¹

In the necessary subordination of himself and his desires to the common good, which is essential, if the game be a perfect thing, the child gets a hint of what will be in future required of him as an ideal citizen.

By reproducing the life of plants, of animals, of human beings, in his games, by depicting natural phenomena, and by the simple hymns of love, gratitude, and aspiration which he sings to his Maker, — he is led to understand his threefold relationships as a child of nature, a child of man, and a child of God.

By utilizing the “natural longing for some mode of activity which is inherent in childhood,” he is enabled to reproduce in visible form the impressions which the external world has made upon his spirit.

By the typical experiences which he lives through, by the touch of other lives upon his own, a dim feeling begins to dawn upon him of those universal relationships on which Froebel loved to dwell, and of that organic unity which is the cohesive power of the universe.

Of the visible effects of these songs and games, with their well-chosen music and appropriate gesture, kindergartners can all speak enthusiastically. We know that the words suggest thought to the child ; the thought

Effect of
Kindergar-
ten Play.

¹ W. T. Harris.

suggests gesture; the gesture aids in awakening the proper feeling; the melody begets spiritual impressions; the gestures, feeling, and melody unite in producing the desired effects on the physical, mental, and moral nature.

The source of the kindergarten songs and games is primarily, of course, to be found in the playing child, for Froebel based all the games he left us on his observation of the instinctive activities of childhood. The greater part of these he collected in the *Mutter und Kose-Lieder*, but there are still a few games used in modern kindergartens which have never been published at all, and which have come down to us by tradition, like the old folk-stories. In late years, however, each large kindergarten centre makes use not only of the *Mother Play*, but of one or two books of games and songs composed or compiled by its prominent local workers, and adds to these such selections from other publications as seem most desirable. Each kindergarten, too, who shows any marked originality in dealing with the games, has her special plays, which no one else can handle as well, and which she has developed to fit the needs of her own particular group of children; but all these, as well as all the compositions in the kindergarten music-books, can, if they are really suitable for children, be traced back to their source in Froebel's collection, and, back of that, to the child himself.

Source of
Songs and
Games.

There is nothing cut and dried, nothing inflexible, in these Mother Play games. It is true that they were framed as illustrations of typical experiences through which the child must pass if he is to reach the fullness of his development, but it was far from Froebel's thought to insist that these especial settings of the truth should always be used. It is characteristic of the first stages in student-life to follow exactly in the footsteps of the leader, and this is wise as well as natural; but by and by, when principles have grown to be a part of life, imitation can be cast aside and individuality developed, for "the truth shall make us free."

Let no passion for originality, however, betray us into a desire to compose new songs and games before we really have anything within ourselves to express, or before we are so in sympathy with the child that he has given us a new suggestion. An old, old game that is the outgrowth of some one else's experience may be a thousand times better than a new, new game we just made up this morning. We have not all the same gifts, and we need not be discouraged if we are never able to compose a new song or play. If we were "born short" in that particular line, it is the law of compensation that some one else should be "born long," and thus we may complement our individual limitations by one another's gifts. "One piece of the wood is cut for a weathercock,"

you know, "and one for the sleeper of a bridge: the virtue of the wood is apparent in both." We pray you (and the prayer is the fruit of prickly experience) do not try to write the words for your games if you have no poetic talent; do not struggle to make new tunes, if you have no musical originality; do not exhaust yourself in the search for new subjects for the mere sake of novelty. Meekly borrow your neighbor's lantern to illuminate your path, and soothe your aching vanity by reflecting that he will probably ask for the loan of yours, by and by, to light him on some other journey.

The kindergarten games and songs may be divided into several distinct classes, —

Family Relationships; Trades and Oc-
cupations; Descriptive Songs; Songs
of the Senses; Representations of Organic Life;
Songs of Natural Phenomena; Songs of the
Gifts and Occupations; Gymnastic, Dancing
and Marching Games; Games of Courtesy and
Politeness (including songs of farewell, greet-
ing, etc.); Ring Songs; Prayers and Hymns;
the more purely symbolic songs illustrating sun,
moon, stars, light and shadow; and improvised
play, or the dramatization of the interests of the
day. These various classes are quite sharply dif-
ferentiated, the one from the other, and each is
needed at some point in the circle of the child's
development. They are not all equally important,

Classification
of Songs and
Games.

however, and good judgment is needed in giving to them their proper relative value.

It may be said, for the benefit of mothers and teachers who are not familiar with kindergarten ways, that the games are always played by a circle of children joining hands. Because of the various gestures and movements accompanying the words, the hands are not always clasped together during the entire play-time, but the ring is formed with some appropriate song in the beginning, and thus the sense of connection is felt, while the shape of the circle at least, is kept to the end. The majority of children's games in all countries are played in this way, as Froebel, of course, had noted; and the form of the circle itself, the symbol of unity, he held to be essential, — the more so, as the principle of self-activity here comes into play, since the children make the ring themselves by their own efforts, and not one of them can be left out without breaking it.

The game, if ideally presented, is always either an outgrowth of previous experience, or an introduction to a desired theme, and is preceded by a talk or story which is designed to be explanatory of the words, and to make clearer the phases of feeling which they illustrate. If presented in any other way, if void of connection with the dominant subject of interest, it will only be a "languishing pantomime

into which we galvanize life with more or less success."

It is somewhat difficult to explain on paper how the games may be freely selected by the children and led by them, and yet move on the general lines sketched by the kindergartner in her plan for the month or season. Miss Blow uses the old theologic statement, "Man walks freely in directed paths," to explain this union of free will and predestination, and we may believe in the truth of the paradox, though unable to explain it. The true kindergartner is a child with the children, and yet an older and a wiser one. The game would not be half as delightful without her, and her charms as a playfellow are so sensibly felt that her lightest word, suggestion, look, and tone are heeded. If she has been successful in creating the right atmosphere in the kindergarten, if she is as thoroughly in sympathy with her children as she ought to be, then her will commonly moves in harmony with theirs, and theirs with hers. They are all thinking about the same things while in the kindergarten, and all looking at them in much the same way; so why is it not perfectly natural that their mental suggestions as to working them out should have a certain family likeness? Of course there are occasions when some dramatic occurrence in the house or in the neighborhood entirely changes the current of thought,

The Children
lead, yet are
guided.

but the wise kindergartner can generally bring the wandering attention back again when the incident has been fully appreciated, or may even, since the higher connection of things is ever present to her mind, use it to illustrate the original subject.

And here enters one of the elements which render kindergarten play so delicate and difficult a thing, requiring supremely good judgment and exquisitely fine sense of proportion. We may so easily become autocrats with children, and impose our own wills upon them so insensibly, that we may fail to realize what we are doing, until our eyes are suddenly opened to the real meaning of our actions. Constant thought and self-examination are necessary to discover whether we are really driving or leading, whether by sheer force of will we are whipping the children along the road, or whether they are gladly winging with us across the blue sky, each one free to leave the course, yet glad to follow.

Another important feature of the games which is suggested by the formation of the
Coöperation. circle is that the coöperation of all is necessary to perfection. Everybody is always needed for the singing and the general dramatic action, and those who are not called upon as principals to-day will be called upon to-morrow. The older children are trained to think of the younger and less capable ones, and to choose them for such parts as they are fitted to fill, and at

least one game is selected each play-time as will be particularly suited to their undeveloped capacities. The unity which binds all members into one whole in these plays is so plainly seen that it aids children in feeling that their conduct is not a matter concerning themselves alone, but one which touches the community. How can any child long continue to say to himself, "I have a right to be naughty if I choose," when he sees before his eyes unmistakable proofs that the indulgence of this right (if it be one) is a direct infringement on the rights of other people? These concrete illustrations of moral truths are most valuable to the child, for, though he might be incredulous as to the probable disastrous consequences of any wrong action if they were prophesied to him, yet he cannot disbelieve the panorama of events unrolled before his eyes, nor attempt to disprove its invincible logic.

There can be no question that upon the freedom of the play depends its approach ^{Freedom in} to perfection. The less ordering, the ^{Play.} less preparation, the less restriction, the less interference, the less talk on the part of the kindergartner, the better will be the game. If any "properties" are required (and the fewer of these the better), they should be placed where the children can find them without a second's delay, for any waiting, when feeling is just at the right point, is as disastrous to play as to cooking.

There should obviously be very little, if any, "costuming" for the games, though there is no harm in a cooper's apron, or a baker's cap, perhaps. We say obviously, but possibly the word needs explanation. The fact is, the *juste milieu* in kindergarten play is as elusive as the place of Mahomet's coffin, but the nearer it comes to absolute simplicity, and the farther from anything faintly resembling a spectacular performance, the better for its ideality.

The children should manage everything themselves as far as may be, the kindergartner only being one of the happy company, and willing to accede to any reasonable suggestion. There should be in our opinion, too, as little choosing of leaders as possible. To ask for volunteers is far more pleasing and less restricted, and is really fairer to every one. It is easy to say simply, "Will six of the largest boys please make a forest of Christmas trees here in the middle of the ring?" or, "Will some one come and be the master cooper to-day?" If a novice at coopering offers himself, of course accept his services. He must learn some time, and why not now? and the want of rhythm in the blows of his hammer will not injure the children a tenth part as much as the spectacle of one especial child always chosen to do certain tricks like a performing poodle. As the children daily emancipate themselves from their shyness, their nervousness, their self-distrust

and sense of unproved capacity, more and more of them are ready to volunteer, until on some glorious occasion (for it *is* glorious to the kindergartner) almost the whole company of children moves forward a little into the circle, when requisition is made for a number of recruits. All of them are not needed, of course, but their willingness to serve shows complete interest and self-forgetfulness, and nobody's feelings are in the least hurt if the leader says, "Oh, that's rather too many for this game. Some of you run back, please, and play next time." A sufficient number always do quietly return to their places at once, and it is only necessary for the kindergartner to be a little watchful lest the timid, unselfish child be always the one to retire, leaving Master Forward, Master Push, and Mistress Malapert to occupy the field.

Compare the freedom illustrated by this unanimous willingness to help in the game, with the military discipline of standing still and waiting to be called for by name, heart throbbing with hope till the selection is made, and sinking with disappointment afterward. The former is simple, free, natural, and childlike; the latter artificial, conventional, narrow, and restricted. We believe that this freedom in play is a matter of growth on the part of the kindergartner (and children, too), and can never be attained until she has lost her self-consciousness, her self-distrust, her stiffness,

her anxiety, her fears, and has developed into a free, well-poised human creature, knowing well her powers and her abilities. If her influence over the children is uncertain; if they are likely to run away with the chariot of discipline, should her hold on the reins relax, — then assuredly she must not attempt free play, for freedom is only suited to those who are self-restrained. If the guiding hand is feeble, then such play sinks into almost ungovernable riot, and a fatal impression is made upon the children that they may turn the games into a kind of saturnalia whenever they so please. Who has not seen this illustrated over and over again, and realized that the kindergartner was almost helpless to control the disorder, and that the children, if they only realized their power, might easily put her to flight altogether, and set up a kingdom of their own? Better, much better, than this reign of misrule, is a stiff and formal discipline of the games, for then, though gayety and spontaneity have fled, yet at least respect and obedience remain.

The stress which Froebel and his followers lay with one accord upon music as a part of their great plan of early education; the time which is spent upon it in every well-organized kindergarten; the spontaneity, delight, and earnestness with which little children take it up; the vigor, ingenuity, and individual talent which kindergartners apply to systematiz-

Music.

ing its influence, — all unite to show the possession of an entirely original idea concerning it. The reader or student who does not grasp this idea fails to possess the one Midas touch which would turn all his study and observation into the pure gold of spiritual comprehension.

Goethe says in his “*Pedagogic Province*” that music should be the centre and starting point of education, and Froebel, fully realizing this, absolutely makes his method turn upon, and be most fitly and beautifully interpreted by, his system of songs and musical games.

Kindergarten music is so characteristic, so poetic, so profoundly touching in its simplicity and purity, so filled with fervor and meaning, that it would of itself inspire us with admiration were it the only salient point of the system. It is the only method of musical training which endeavors to express the same idea in poetic words, harmonious melody, and fitting motion, appealing thus to the thought, feeling, and activity of the child.

We should have nothing but good though simple music in the kindergarten, and here we are prone to error, for musical taste is unhappily not universal. Simply negative music, that is “not bad,” will not do; we must have it positively and confessedly good. The melody should be a pure one, — that is, one which is not dependent on an accompaniment to make it pleasing, but can be

sung without the support of any instrument, and still be interesting and effective.

It must be written in a suitable compass ; some musical critics holding that for little children this compass lies between the D below the treble staff to the D an octave above. Of course there are many children who can sing middle C, and also treble E, but it is not best to introduce these notes often, as they cannot be taken by the whole company.

The melody must be easy to sing. It must not have frequent accidentals, changes of key, nor difficult rhythms and intervals ; and it must approach the character of the now fashionably despised Italian music, so far as to have a recognizable "tune in it" which will at once appeal even to the savage breast.

The melody should have no vulgar associations. No matter whether it be really good in itself, if its original words were inappropriate, if it be whistled by street boys, tinkled out on street pianos, ground out on hand-organs, shouted by midnight revelers, it must not be brought into the kindergarten, for the reek of the pavement will cling to it still.

It should be appropriate to the sentiment of the words to which it is set, and here musical taste is often sadly wanting. It seems hardly necessary to say that a prayer should not be sung to a light waltz movement, nor verses descriptive

of the coming of spring to a martial air like "Men of Harlech;" yet both these musical abominations have come to our ears, and two virtuous and truly exemplary young women were answerable for them.

And here miserable Experience would fain lift up her voice and bay the moon as she recalls the marches and the piano accompaniments she has often heard from kindergartners. Who has not seen the children marching around and around the room nine hundred and ninety-nine times to the same tune, played (with the loud pedal constantly in use) until it seemed that another repetition would bring on acute mania? Who does not know the kindergartner who thinks one bass note, if it be played heavily enough, all-sufficient for any brief melody, and having started with the first chord of C, continues to use it, though the tune change to E or G, or Q or Z?

Who has not met the person who says, "Kindergarten music is so simple, you know," and proceeds to illustrate her belief by drumming out the tunes with one finger? So it is simple in one sense, and so it ought to be; but it is not rudimentary, and the student just beginning kindergarten work may assure herself that all her natural musical gifts and acquired musical graces will be fewer than she needs for the career on which she has entered.

We also insist in the true kindergarten that

the words of the songs shall be poetic. All kindergarten verses do not reach this ideal, Words of Songs. to be sure, but our aim really is that the children should never hear an imperfect rhyme, a false metre, or any but the most expressive and charming language. It is no easy thing to write really good and appropriate words for these songs and games, and neither confine one's self entirely to monosyllables, nor use language above the comprehension of the child. The verses must be carefully taught and explained, too, and the kindergartner must frequently listen quietly to the singing to be able to correct mispronunciations, slurring and running together of words, or entire misinterpretations. She will frequently be rewarded by hearing a new and altogether unintelligible version of an apparently simple line, or perhaps a version quite contrary to the original in meaning. One of the authors well remembers a morning on her circle when a small boy abruptly inquired, after Reinecke's "From the Far Blue Heaven" had been sung, "Miss Kate, why will God never git yer?" This question fell upon the assembled company — fifty children, four teachers, and an assemblage of dignified visitors, — as might a bombshell in time of peace. Apparently it had no relation to the song, and certainly not with the preceding religious teaching. "My dear boy," said Miss Kate after an astonished pause, "I don't know what you

mean." "Yes, you do," persisted this seeker after truth: "we sing it every day, — 'God will never git yer, for He loves yer well.'" (Tableau among the kindergartners, who remember that the line of the Reinecke song is, "God will ne'er forget you!") This is a plain illustration of the folly of using elisions and abbreviations in children's verse, — such as *whene'er*, *where'er*, *e'en*, *ne'er*, and *e'er*. If all children were as thoughtful and persistent as this little California boy, mistakes in words might often be corrected; but the majority repeat them quite unthinkingly, and grow up, like the often-quoted child, singing of the "consecrated, cross-eyed bear."

The words of the songs and games should, of course, follow the general musical rule of fitting easily pronounced syllables to difficult notes, etc. The form of the sentences should be as nearly as possible the usual form of speech, and there should be no arbitrary division of the words to fit the music, no inversion of phrases, and no imperfect rhymes. One glaring example of two of these faults was much used some years ago in the first verse of a certain Guessing game: —

"One of us has disappear-*ed*;
Can you tell which one it *is*?
And if you should guess *a*-rightly,
We will give to you a *kiss*."

Do we not all remember, too, these last lines of a certain verse? —

“Pleased to learn, and spending
Not our time in vain.”

The unusual position of the *not* invariably confused most of the children, and each morning they blithely warbled

“Pleased to learn, and spending
All our time in vain.”

We place great stress upon gesture in the kindergarten, thus deepening the impression and giving life and meaning to the whole song. Feeling and action are thus combined.

Kindergarten children are the only created beings, so far as we know, who are taught to move freely when they sing, though of course the art is understood on the stage. What Emerson says in “Social Aims” about the natural attitudes of children illustrates clearly our thought of gesture in the kindergarten games. “Give me a thought,” he says, “and my hands and legs and voice and face will all go right. And we are awkward for want of thought. The inspiration is scanty, and does not arrive at the extremities.”

Froebel intended that the movements should be carefully executed in the games, for, in common with all masters of gesture, he believed in the constant interaction of body and mind, that not only is the inward feeling intensified by the outward expression of it, but that the constant assumption of a certain attitude, or repetition of a

certain movement, will tend to develop the corresponding feeling. If the inspiration of the game is full enough and free enough, the extremities will take care of themselves, as Emerson suggests. The children are very seldom awkward, — they are too unconseious of self to be anything but natural and expressive in their movements: but of course in proportion as the kindergartner is trained in the principles of physical culture, as she is mistress of the theory of gesture, the children, being natural mimies, will move more freely and gracefully. For the reasons already given, it is obvious that the gestures of the songs and games must be carefully thought out, so that they will be truly expressive of the idea they are intended to illustrate. They are never to be introduced because they are beautiful, but for the sake of harmonious expression, and to afford an outlet for true feeling. They must never descend to mimicry, but must represent the characteristic activity of the moving object, and not its external peculiarities. It is not well, in our opinion, to dwell too much on absolutely concerted action, on the performance of the movements in perfect time, for this, with the various ages of children on the circle, would require an immense amount of drill, — a drill which would be destructive to spontaneity. As the sense of rhythm develops, the gestures will be made more and more in unison; but if they never reach perfection in this regard,

it is not a matter of great importance. The vital thing is that the gestures should be the true ones, and that the tide of feeling behind them should be so strong as to move *all* the children to make them.

Perhaps we should say a word about certain movements which some songs require, such as scrubbing, leaping, running, mowing, etc., which are really quite violent exercise, and cannot be performed while singing without injury to the voice. In these cases a certain number of children might be detailed to form a choir for the moment, and the remainder go through the requisite pantomime.

It is a matter of discussion with some persons whether a prescriptive gesture — that is, one suggested by the kindergartner — can ever be a free one, and expressive of the real feeling of the child. Here we meet again the working theory which so constantly appears in the kindergarten games, and which Dr. Harris calls “the induction of the substance of prescription into the form of freedom.” The simple explanation of it is that the kindergartner awakens the true feeling in the minds of the children, and calls upon them for their idea of its expression by gesture. If some little one illustrates it by a trivial movement, or one which only represents a surface activity, another child probably sees deeper and corrects him. If no one in the circle, however, has any idea of how a rab-

bit leaps, for instance, it is quite clear that they have never seen one, and the remedy is indicated, as the doctors say. The kindergartner furnishes the substance of prescription in her explanations, her refusal to accept inappropriate gestures, her suggestions as to worthy ones, and the child follows the form of freedom in his endeavor to reach the ideal which she holds before him.

In the classification of the songs and games an allusion was made to improvised play, ^{Improvised} and possibly the term needs some ex-^{Play.}planation. We mean by this such play as kindergartner and children arrange on the spur of the moment, and which is without words, and probably without music, unless a descriptive accompaniment is required. It is often the illustration of some story or poem which has been unusually well told, and which offers such dramatic possibilities as to evoke eager cries from the children of "Let 's play it! let 's play it!" No story can be successfully played, however, unless it has a number of characters, and unless there is a good deal of action involved. Another kind of improvised play is the dramatization of fascinating street sights seen on the way to school, as the dancing bear and his keeper, followed by a crowd of children; the circus procession, the policeman's drill, the parade of some military organization. These in the country would be paralleled by the ploughmen at work, the farmers sowing the seed

and weeding the gardens, the mowing and reaping, etc. ; and though all these are labors essential to life, and therefore more ideally suitable for kindergarten games, yet we cannot altogether exclude from our play the various activities of man which come under the eye of the city child. Improvised play is only occasional, of course ; but it is valuable, because it calls out so much individual thought and action from the children, as well as such a fervor of interest.

The ideal kindergarten game, we boldly say, requires no discipline whatever. If it is strictly Froebelian, — that is, if it is simple, childlike, giving opportunities for all to join, appealing to emotions and ideas within youthful range, if it is conducted as it should be, — it will hold the attention of a majority of the children, and will no more require commands or exhortations to keep order than a river requires threats to run its proper course. If attention seems to wander ; if children talk to each other and forget to sing ; if they are listless and uninterested ; if they have constantly to be told to make the gestures and keep the circle intact, — then something is wrong, of course ; but the little ones themselves are not in fault unless they have been depraved by systematic mismanagement. Of course there are days when everything goes wrong, and when the blackness of discouragement settles down upon even the most successful

Discipline in
the Games.

of kindergartners. She may be over-tired, overtroubled, unusually nervous, not quite as well-poised as usual, and the children, like chameleons, change their color at once to suit hers. They may, perhaps, be somewhat overwrought themselves; the first game may have been a shade too festive, or the preceding recess too riotous;—it only requires a touch and everything is out of balance. These “bad days” come less and less often with growing experience; but they will appear occasionally, and the only help seems to be to sit down and require absolute silence and quiet from every one until sweet Peace unfolds her white wings and flutters down again. Then some restful game may be chosen, and playtime end in serenity, if not in unclouded gayety.

Black as are these infrequent days, however, they fade into insignificance, they can scarcely be seen at all, when they stand near the white radiance of the innumerable company of good days. No one who simply looks on, and is not an organic part of kindergarten play, can appreciate what Froebel calls “the reflex feeling of blessedness which always flows back over our souls, and over our minds and bodies also, when we have been amongst the children playing kindergarten games.” He never said anything more true; and every good kindergartner, every person who has played happily with children anywhere, has felt this blessedness

Effect of
the Games
on the Kin-
dergartner.

which is a form of spiritual exaltation, and which emanates from the absolute happiness of these souls unspotted by the world. It is "perfect human joy, which is also a divine worship, for it is ordered by God."

MORE ABOUT PLAY

THERE is a quaint old church, in a far-away corner of this country, which bears above its clock-dial these words, carved in stone : “ My son, observe the time and fly from evil.” Many who pass the inscription every day never lift their heads to see it ; many would pay no heed, even if their eyes chanced to fall on the moss-grown words : but may we not suppose that now and then they serve as a warning to some struggling human creature ? We believe, it is true, more in positive than in negative teaching ; but of what avail is all our hardly-gained experience if we may not use it now and then to adjure others to fly from evil ? If we know that one of two broad roads leads directly to a precipice, down which no one may fall without serious injury, is it not our duty to make ourselves into guide-posts and stand with uplifted finger at the parting of the roads, saying, “ Go not this way ” ? In such a case, it is not enough to point out the right path ; it is even more necessary to bar the wrong one, and permit no one to pass down it. We may be forgiven, then, if we make ourselves into sign-boards plainly lettered, that the careless

traveler make no mistake in the roads ; for broad is the way that leadeth to failure, and many there be that travel thereon. We might use with advantage, too, the remainder of the metaphor, because there can be no doubt whatever that strait is the gate and narrow is the way which leadeth unto the ideal kindergarten play ; and few, very few, there be that find it. We believe that to conduct the games as Froebel intended is the highest achievement set before the kindergartner, and to extract from them their richest possibilities requires more than a touch of genius. Shall we then, since success is so doubtful, relinquish the struggle altogether ? No ; for although it is probable that only three persons out of ten are fitted by nature to be ideal leaders of child-play, yet the other seven may by serious endeavor attain to a fair degree of proficiency in the art, and thus give to the children in their care a great deal of pleasure and profit. If the kindergartner cannot be a glorious success in this line, there is no need of her being an ignominious failure, and to the end that this latter casualty be avoided we propose to bar a number of roads which she might perhaps be inclined to travel.

In the first place, then, she must not fire the game at the assembled company, like a shot from a cannon, — saying, for instance, “ We will learn a game about the carpenter to-day, children. Now say the words after me nicely.” This always re-

minds one of a certain game called "Beast, Bird, or Fish," in which the leader stands in the centre of the room with a cane, and after slowly repeating "Beast, Bird, or Fish" several times, and leisurely twirling his cane, suddenly points it at you, shouting "Bird!" perhaps, whereupon you are at once expected to give the name of some feathered creature. The shock is so great, the assault so unexpected, that you either remain speechless, or stammer "Rhinceros," or "Shark," or something equally inappropriate.

The kindergartner must not treat the playtime as a period altogether apart from the other employments of the day, but use it to strengthen the orderly series of impressions which gift, occupation, story, game, and exercise are all employed to make.

She must not play in swift succession a number of games on entirely different subjects, for if she does this she dissipates, not disciplines, the children's minds.

She must not pass too rapidly from one game to another in the same playtime, even though all be connected, for this is a fostering of caprice.

Nor must she allow the same game to be played over and over and over again, lest familiarity, indeed, breed contempt.

She must not play a game in the same way on every occasion, but suggest slight changes and improvements that will give to it the zest of novelty.

She must not have her playtime too long, for mere physical and mental weariness often makes the children inattentive or unruly.

She must not obtrude her own personality too much, but must teach the children to be leaders, while she remains the power behind the throne.

She must not be arbitrary in her ideas about playing any game, but encourage the children to make their own suggestions, which frequently prove most useful and original.

The plays she teaches must not be upon subjects outside the child's experience, and must never appeal to ideas and emotions beyond his years. There is nothing more unpleasant than a precocious child, and Heaven forefend that we should foster precocity in the kindergarten. If she has taught any game which may with justice be called "cute" (forgive the word) by an ignorant on-looker, then let her commit it to oblivion on the moment, and pray that her sins be forgiven her.

She must not drill her charges like a company of soldiers, nor harry them constantly about the position of their hands and feet and head and shoulders, for in this attention to details strength of feeling is frittered away.

Nor must she allow their spontaneity such full play that it comes dangerously near to riot. A highway robber is undoubtedly "spontaneous"

when he leaps upon you in some lonely road, but such spontaneity is hardly to be encouraged.

She must not, as a rule, select games in which the action is confined to two or three participants. The ideal game engages a majority, at least, of the children.

The kindergartner must never allow certain capable children always to take the principal parts, for this sunshine of favor forces them into precocity and boastfulness, while the corresponding shade develops and stunts the poor little dullards and weaklings in the background.

She must never "show off" her children, even to gratify the most innocent of maternal vanity. It is true they are the loveliest creatures in the world to her when they are playing a certain game, but if they suspect that game to have been introduced in order to exhibit their attractions, then where has the loveliness fled?

She must use as much common sense as she has been gifted with by nature in suiting the games to the weather, and the mental and physical condition of the children. She must not expect to be successful with a game requiring a high tide of gay feeling, on a dull, damp morning, or introduce a steam-engine and car play when the mercury is at eighty-seven degrees in the shade.

In the preceding chapter many things are written that the kindergartner must do if she would be a successful leader of the games, but two more things may yet be said.

The first of these is, that she must not hold herself above criticism. It may be that she knows her games are not what they should be, and yet cannot tell what is amiss. Why not ask some friendly and experienced kindergartner, then, to come and tell what she sees with her fresh eyes? If this does not prove helpful, then let her set apart certain days to visit acknowledged leaders of kindergarten play, and see what they do and how they do it. Above all, let her acknowledge her failures to herself, and vow to accept all suggestions and criticisms, be they kindly or unkindly, that make her deficiencies more clear to her own mind. If she has parted with her vanity and is willing to be led, then guidance will surely come.

And lastly, let her assure herself that she really knows where she is aiming; for if she is at all uncertain about it, how can she expect to hit the mark? Does she know what kindergarten play really should be? does she comprehend its beauty and its power, and realize what a mighty weapon lies ready to her hand, if she can only learn to use it? If she cannot answer in the affirmative, then let her go to Froebel again, and read him as she never read before.

She must not confine herself to the "Mother Play," for in the "Pedagogics," the "Reminiscences," and the "Letters" she will find many a ray of illumination for her clouded mind.

THE KINDERGARTEN AS A SCHOOL OF LIFE FOR WOMEN

"The training is invaluable to all women, regardless of whether or not they continue in the profession. The insight gained to discriminate between essentials and non-essentials, the power to think well, to adapt means to ends, the command of self, will insure certain and unusual success in any field of usefulness."

WILLIAM T. HARRIS.

How many women in our country to-day are revolving in their minds, over and over and over again, the question of "troublesome daughters," — troublesome, not in themselves perhaps, but in the numerous weighty and complicated questions attending their bringing-up, and their proper preparation for life.

*The Training
of Daughters.*

Far, indeed, have we traveled since the days when our language was struggling into being, and when the word "daughter" simply meant "one who milks the cow." Easy enough, one would say, to bring up a daughter then, for the definition clearly shows the primitive conditions of life. Given the cow to milk (and her procurement would obviously not fall upon the daughter), and what a Dresden shepherdess existence opens up to view, of leading the gentle beast to the brook in the morning gray; of lying by her side, deep in grass and

flowers, while she grazed the long hours through ; of wading with her into softly shaded pools at hot noontides ; and of filling earthen vessels with her foaming milk at night !

Happy woman who need only prepare her daughter for such labors ! her lot seems an idyllic one when contrasted with that of the careworn mother of to-day who feels that upon her child will inevitably fall a heavy weight of duties and responsibilities.

Wherever we go we are constantly meeting these anxious mothers who want advice as to what they shall do with their daughters, and almost every mail brings a sheaf of letters asking similar questions. The truth is, most sensible women feel that the education of girls is not to-day, and has never been, an entirely satisfactory one. Even now that a higher education for women is an established fact, that higher education still leaves many tracts of feminine nature unexplored and uncultivated. It does not give a complete and full development of all the powers and faculties ; it needs supplementing by some course of training which shall address the heart and soul as much as it does the intellect.

To all these perplexed and conscientious women we have one answer : “ Whatever your daughter does or learns before or afterwards, let her study kindergarten as an essential part of her equipment for life ; for, as our dear

Kindergarten
Study.

and wise Elizabeth Peabody said, it is the highest finish that can be given to a woman's education." It is understood, of course, that in giving such an answer we are not considering the relative values of the various means of livelihood open to young women; that we are not advocating the kindergarten as the highest or most lucrative branch of teaching, or the profession which offers most opportunities to dawning ambition. We are not looking at the work in any of these lights, but are merely considering it as an education and as a development — as a training of the heart and soul and mind which prepares for any and every vocation in life, and which need not, and in fact cannot, be given up, whether the daughter in question marries or remains single. Kindergarten training, when rightly given, is true culture, and as such becomes an integral part of the whole woman. It is no veneer of accomplishments, or varnish of superficial knowledge; it is rather a divine touch which changes the water of life into wine.

We may well be thankful for the increased attention which is being paid of late Study of
Childhood. years to the study of childhood, and for the fuller consecration of women to its service.

Friedrich Froebel, the prophet of the new educational era, in a private letter written in 1847 says: "All progress depends on that of education; and no education, least of all that of

infancy, can dispense with the active coöperation of women, who should have a full comprehension of their natural calling, — the care of childhood. Women are not as yet acquainted even with the preliminaries of the education of man, which ignorance causes them to expect that the superficial educators of youth should make good again what the mothers have spoiled. This evil we have to overcome, and I know of no other means so thorough and certain to effect their purpose as the kindergarten. Let young women go there, and see the development of child-life going on before their eyes, noticing and understanding the laws and workings of it."

The results of education undoubtedly depend on its beginnings, and these are in the hands of women. Here, at least, is a partial solution of the vexed woman question which does not restrict woman's sphere, but enlarges it rather, calling her more earnestly to become wiser, higher, better, stronger, the equal of men, destined, as she is, to become the mother and first educator of men. If any one fears that "higher education" of any sort — college training or advanced study, addressing the dry bones of the intellect rather than the spirit — will unfit women for the duties that inevitably lie before most of them, he will see in the attempt of the kindergarten to unite broad mental training with sweet, gentle heart-culture a certain corrective, if any be needed.

(Men are so anxious, by the way, lest women should be too "strong-minded." I wonder it seldom occurs to them to worry lest they be too *weak-minded*.)

It is not enough that divine ideas — man-begotten, so they say — should exist in the world: there must be the necessary devotion, endurance, and self-sacrifice to carry them out, and this is the task of women. Our girls are being trained too much like celibates at present; and if we had the eloquence to prove that every woman should finish her education by one or two years' contemplation and study of childhood and its needs, we should feel that we had done an inestimable service to humanity. Herbert Spencer says truly that almost the only vocation for which woman is seldom wisely fitted is the one which she generally assumes, — that of the child's first educator. "Is it that this responsibility is but a remote contingency? On the contrary, it is certain to devolve on nine out of ten. Is it that the discharge of it is easy? Certainly not; of all functions which the adult has to fulfill, it is the most difficult. Is it that each may be trusted, by self-instruction, to fit himself or herself for the office of parent? No; not only is the need of such self-instruction unrecognized, but the complexity of the subject renders it the one of all others in which self-instruction is least likely to succeed."

"The subject which includes all other sub-

jects," says the great philosopher, "and therefore the subject in which a woman's education should culminate, is the Theory and Practice of Education."

In truth, what women most need for the due working-out of their heaven-born mission, is not the sense of duty, still less the love, but the sense of its real importance and the knowledge fitting them to fulfill it. Froebel, after years of striving and thought, turned from the schools to the nurseries, and from the professors to the mothers. And truly this work which he commends among the little children of the land, in home and kindergarten and school, blesses every one that touches it, — him that gives and him that takes.

To make children happy gladdens all human hearts; to be with them, to work for them, is like sitting in the sunshine; and Froebel has helped us to understand and educate them wisely, besides making them happy. He who was left a motherless babe, who became an orphan youth and a childless man, has bequeathed to the children what is indeed a priceless legacy, and every true, high-minded woman should constitute herself executrix that each of these little ones may receive his rightful inheritance. It is impossible for such a woman to study Froebel and be anything but earnest, for he fills one with a divine enthusiasm for childhood that makes one long, unspeakably, to guide and guard it rightly.

We are most of us accustomed now to value kindergarten work as an educational force at the beginning of a child's life in the nursery and school ; we are fairly well convinced of its mighty power as a means of reaching the children of the masses in philanthropic ways, by teaching them at the outset what is good, beautiful, and true, as well as by giving the dormant faculties a spur to higher action : but what we do not fully understand is, what this kind of work is doing for women, — for the daughters, the future mothers, of the nation. It is giving them new and consecrated views of childhood and motherhood, as well as of the profession of teaching ; giving them a method of education after nature's own heart, which they may use in the " sweet, safe corner of the household fire," behind the heads of their own children, or for the children of others. Dr. William T. Harris, our United States Commissioner of Education, says : " A young woman will find so much culture of thought to be derived from the discussion of Froebel's insights and theories, . . . experience that will prove invaluable to her as a wife and mother, that she will serve her apprenticeship in the kindergarten gladly, though it be no part of her intention to follow teaching as a vocation. It is a part of the system, as an adjunct to the public schools, to educate young women in these valuable matters relating to the early training of

What the Kindergarten does for Women.

children. I have thought," he continues, "the benefit derived by the two hundred young women of the St. Louis kindergartens from the lectures of Miss Blow to be of sufficient value to compensate the city for the cost of the kindergartens. A nobler and more enlightened womanhood will result, and the family will prove a better nurture for the child." And again he writes: "Perhaps the greatest merit of Froebel's system is found in the fact that it furnishes a deep philosophy for the teachers. Most pedagogic works furnish only a code of management for the school-room. Froebel gives a view of the world in substantial agreement with the spiritual systems of philosophy that have prevailed in all times. It is, I am persuaded, this fact that explains the almost fanatical zeal of his followers, and, what is far more significant, the fact that those who read his work are always growing in insight and in power of higher advancement."

When Dr. Harris, natural teacher, philosopher, and metaphysician, speaks thus, we may be well assured that kindergarten training has indeed an inestimable value in mind and soul culture.

Froebel, more than any other educator perhaps, satisfies the soul as well as the mind of the student. Many other men preceded him; he was only the outgrowth of his time: but he reduced theories to practice, and transported the vague and shadowy dreams of other teachers into a rich

world of reality. There can be no happier people than those who believe in Froebel's principles. They have a beacon star of faith in their work, — faith in the universality and immutability of the law of love when it is applied intelligently, faith in childhood and its original purity, faith in humanity and its ultimate destiny.

To those who study this new education life is no longer a mystery. Many a girl has said when the purpose of the kindergarten began to dawn upon her, that she then first understood the meaning of existence, and we doubt whether a more eloquent commentary on the value of the study could be made than such an exclamation from a young girl just entering life, with all its hopes and enchantments shining before her eyes.

The fact that the kindergarten is in truth a school of life for women, is as yet but imperfectly understood. At the graduation exercises of a kindergarten normal school which a certain training teacher attended last year, a gentleman sat beside her who appeared much interested in the occasion. At the close of the programme he remarked, and the remark is quoted because it is one which is so often made: "This class of young women seems so charming and intelligent, one cannot but regret that their teacher's devotion and their own talents should be so largely lost; for I suppose most of them will marry in a few years, and, like their piano-playing and their French,

this newly-acquired knowledge will be quickly dropped."

"My dear sir," the teacher replied, "you cannot have a conception of what kindergarten training means. I suppose many of these young women will marry. I will even go so far as to hope it. They are not vowed to celibacy, as far as I am aware, and a man would be blind and stupid indeed who could pass them by; but the beauty of kindergarten training is this,—it will not only make them better kindergartners and teachers and governesses, but better sisters, better wives and mothers; yes, and sweeter, more cheerful old maids, simply because it makes them better women."

This was all her answer at the time, but she might have gone on to say: The training, if it be true training, so addresses the deepest, truest instincts of women that its hold grows more and more irresistible the farther the student advances. As an idea, a conception, it is so large, so many-sided, that year after year, as she bends her energies to its full comprehension, she finds that what she saw at first was but a dim outline of the real thing, as the landscape that looked blurred and confused in the morning mist grows ever clearer under the rays of the noonday sun. It has that in it which ought to make a woman more thoughtful, broad-minded, earnest, logical, original, self-reliant, and patient. If it does not,

then the soil is too barren for the growth of such sweet flowers : but at any rate the nature will be enriched under its influence, girlish thoughtlessness and frivolity slip off like an outer garment, and the true woman stand revealed, — bright, earnest, tender, strong, not perfect, but longing to be and trying to be, — a woman who has lived with children, beloved because she has loved, getting because she has given, growing because she has lived, developing because she has thought, happy because she has conferred happiness, good, or at least better, through trying to make others better.

You may think now, having never studied Froebel, that we kindergartners speak in too serious a tone of what seems to be child's play ; but remember that " methods may make a skillful teacher, but only his aims can make him a blessing or a curse."

Do not call this preaching. It is true that, believing in a vocation in life, we earnestly admire and reverence this particular one, because it seems to evoke more from a woman, and enables her to give more to the world, than almost anything else, except it be an earnest, self-sacrificing, wise, and watchful motherhood, and it is an especial and complete preparation for that still greater mission of woman.

If you think we speak in too glowing terms of what seems to some people only one of the many

ways to earn a livelihood, we assure you that, if you are a true woman, it will soon be difficult for you to speak with anything but enthusiasm of such a cause, if you once begin to uphold it.

After all, the enthusiasts have done most of the work in this apathetic world : What does enthusiasm mean but "filled with God"? If those women whose lives seem to them bereft of all love and comfort could only be reached, they might gain peace and contentment by showering happiness around them in ministering to the needs of little children according to the good old master Froebel.

No woman need be ashamed of enthusiasm in such a work, though her enthusiasm must always be tempered with discretion and earnestness. She must believe in her vocation with all her heart, and foster the deep conviction that she has her hand on one of the levers which is going to move the world toward God's hope and thought of it. If we love the all-good first and best, our life-work large or small next, and put into it all the grace and force of a sweet and strong womanhood, then and then only can we draw others to a higher level than the one we stand upon, that

Value of
Enthusiasm.

"The good begun by us may onward flow
In many a branching stream and wider grow."

Never tell us, then, dear masculine critics, that this sort of work will be wasted on our daughters, should they marry instead of using it as a means

of livelihood, but rather apply yourselves diligently to the creation of some sort of training-school for young men, that the fathers of the future may keep pace in their development with the future mothers.

This kindergarten work which we so prize, and which we so commend to the study of women, is not by any means a perfect thing as yet, but we feel that it is planted in the right soil, and that it has the power to grow. It is full of eager life and aspiration and teachableness; it is often misunderstood, misinterpreted, misapplied, but its destiny is that of all truth: it may be delayed, it cannot be prevented.

The Future
of Kinder-
garten
Work.

The patient study of little children may not seem a brilliant vocation to the *fin de siècle* girl, but in the revolt of the daughters that forms the present theme of English and American literature you will seldom see any direct shirking or belittling of maternal responsibilities. The "revolting daughter" wants to be free: she wants to ride and drive, hunt and fish, fight and preach, kill and cure, serve on a jury, and vote for her candidate; but after all, she seldom wants to be anything better than a woman, if there is anything better.

When we speak of the kindergarten as a school of life for women, we are not relegating them to an existence spent in the nursery corner: we are only urging that the greatest of all subjects should

not be excluded from their curriculum, for all women should recognize that, as Froebel said, "childhood and womanliness (the care of childhood and the life of women) are inseparably connected and they form a unit, and that God and nature have placed the protection of the human plant in their hands."

We have not evolved as yet the ideal training-school for women, nor have we the ideal kindergarten for little children, as Froebel meant it, partly because we have not the ideal kindergartner, who must first be the ideal woman. She, alas! is not born yet, though we have every faith that she will come to us some time, and that the kindergarten influence will be one of the kind fairies who will lavish good gifts upon her when once her birth is heralded.

EXCELSIOR

"Let thy spirit burn with a steady light. Thou canst not know when another shall catch the sacred fire from thee."

EVERY year, as the kindergarten grows in public favor, greater things are demanded of its votaries. Courses of training are lengthened, increased age and attainments required for entrance, greater numbers of studies taken up, more stringent examinations held, and post-graduate courses more and more insisted upon. Longer, fuller experience only serves to deepen the conviction that the ideal kindergartner The Ideal Kindergartner. needs greater intelligence, truer refinement, wider knowledge, more varied accomplishments, better judgment, and deeper, finer qualities of heart and soul, than any other teacher.

What, then, may we do to prove ourselves worthy of such a high vocation? how may we grow to attain, though in ever so slight a measure, the consummate personality of the great teacher? "He is rare," says a writer of great moral insight, "more rare than great men in other spheres of action, and his influence, like a climate, is strong and silent,—

“ ‘ As sunbeams stream through liberal space,
And nothing jostle or displace.’

“ His work is silent, his studies are secluded, but his influence is along the way where men become immortal. He is teacher and taught in one, for he must be a student of human nature, and the student of human nature is the pupil of God.”¹

What shall we do in the coming years to realize this definition in our daily lives? Let us consider the matter, mindful of past errors, clear-eyed as to present deficiencies, hopeful of future improvement.

We cannot work any harder or devote ourselves any more conscientiously to duty, perhaps, but what we do need may be told in one word, — self-development. Nor is the aim a selfish one, for our added wisdom and culture will all be dedicated to others.

We are radiating from Monday to Friday. Do we absorb enough to be equal to it? Our work is exacting; it demands a constant accession of power, ingenuity in ways and means, and originality in methods of thought. It is not an easy thing to keep ourselves first abreast and then ahead of our work as we should, — to live on that high plane where we drink in inspiration with every breath and give it out again in every word. Neither can it be reached by a single effort, however intense, for “life can never be a

Radiation *vs.*
Absorption.

¹ Rev. Horatio Stebbins, D.D.

flight toward the highest; it must always be a slow, weary climbing, every step gained with stern difficulty."

The teacher who is still acquiring knowledge always sympathizes more completely with those who are endeavoring to learn, and no one can teach well who has lost this sympathy. No teacher or kindergarten deserves the name who is not also a student. It might almost be said that it does not matter what we study, so long as we *study*—and grow. He who knows only one thing knows nothing.

The more knowledge we possess, whether it bears directly on our chosen profession or not, the greater breadth and strength we shall have, the greater facility of acquisition, the larger receptive powers, and the more extended range of thought: but, above all, our minds will gradually grow into that state in which they assimilate knowledge unconsciously, without intense effort; in which slight impressions will produce results; in which, if the smallest thought-germ be dropped, a garden will grow in a single night; in which intuitions of truth, born of this and that and the other suggestion, will spring into being and blossom into action. Our eyes and ears will be open, our minds and hearts and souls alive and awake. "Heaven sends us ten thousand truths, but, because our doors and windows are closed to them, they sit and sing awhile upon the roof and then fly away."

The moment we begin to think about or study a certain subject, we notice that it immediately assumes a relation to other things about us, and to our own stock of information. It supplements certain things we know already, and is itself explained by something else which is our own. Every new acquisition helps us to a firmer grasp and understanding of what we have previously acquired, so that the whole matter of self-improvement, though attended with difficulties, is the most hopeful thing in the universe; for with every fresh glimpse of wisdom's face the earth seems to grow fairer, human nature the grander, labor the sweeter, and lighter too, truth the nearer, endurance the easier, and the soul's vision of God brighter, more glorious, more inspiring! "In the humblest thing, if the mind seizes it thoroughly, it grasps the whole world," says Goethe.

But, of course, we must not study aimlessly, for the mere sake of study, — there is too much of that already. It avails nothing to heap knowledge bit on bit, while the analytical faculty is perhaps wholly inadequate to the work of discrimination, — of perceiving relationships. We must try to study with complete directness of purpose; first selecting, of course, those lines of thought which bear most readily and directly on our chosen work in life.

We need greater personal effort and culture,

because we have to learn from thought and experiment what, in some degree, other teachers can learn from the records of past experience; and, in any plan for further development which includes laborious application and continued effort, we shall not have any special sympathy, or receive any special impetus, from persons unfamiliar with the scope of kindergarten methods. After all the tomes that have been written on the kindergarten, after all the talks and lectures on the subject, there still remain hordes of good but uninstructed people who say, "Nonsense! you know enough to teach those little things! What knowledge can be required to amuse babies?"

Babies? Yes, and yet "there is no spot on earth so big with fate as that within the four walls of the kindergarten and primary school-room."

You may hear, occasionally, that the kindergarten seems scarcely to have fulfilled the promise of its theory. We need not be surprised at this. Herbert Spencer

The Best
Teachers for
the Best
Methods.

says: "The success of every appliance depends mainly upon the intelligence with which it is used. It is a trite remark that, having the choicest tools, an unskilled artisan will botch his work; and poor teachers will fail even with the best methods. Indeed, the goodness of the method becomes in such case a cause of failure; as, to continue the simile, the perfection of the tool becomes, in undisciplined

hands, a source of imperfection in results. A simple, unchanging, almost mechanical routine of tuition may be carried out by the commonest intellects, with such small beneficial effect as it is capable of producing; but a complete system, a system as heterogeneous in its appliances as the mind in its faculties, — a system proposing a special means for each special end, — demands for its right employment powers such as few teachers possess. . . . The true education is practicable only to the true philosopher. Judge, then, what prospect a philosophical method now has of being acted out! (Knowing so little as we yet do of psychology, and ignorant as teachers often are of that little, what chance has a system which requires psychology for its basis?"

This, then, is the root of the whole matter.

Minds as
well as
Hearts.

We have a great work to do; we are doing it with all our hearts: let us do it with all our minds as well, though the mere "book-learning" — the facts, the items, the theories we shall gain — will be empty and fruitless and vain enough until they have slipped from knowledge into wisdom, which is knowledge become one's self. Before this, "it is only learning, not education," — "which is learning transformed to faculty," as some one says. It is only the means *by* which, and not the end *for* which. It is only leaves, not fruit.

Some good man said: "The very best result of

culture is still a finer common sense. Common sense, — the knack of using swiftly, surely, and in conjunction, the common human powers. He who gets that knack may boast with Richter that he has “made the most he could out of the stuff.” “To know what we know, to know that we don’t know much, to know how to get what we don’t know and need,” — that is what comes to us from true education; it is the true secret of life’s harvest. Let us tear down our spirit-barns every year to build bigger ones to hold the richness of that harvest. If we cannot travel hence to behold the harvest of others, let us be forever setting out on the higher journeys in ourselves. There are undiscovered countries in every human creature.

Thus, with knowledge and experience blended with love, we shall develop that clarified vision which we need in dealing with budding minds and souls, — something of Michael Angelo’s vision; you remember, as he passed by a quarry, he said, “Bring that rock to my study; I see an angel in it!” That is what we need, — the eye to see the angels in the rocks: only so will they ever be released and given to men.

A young teacher’s first year or so of work after her graduation must of necessity be largely experimental. She is too much First Years of Teaching. occupied with practical affairs, with school management and discipline, — with trying to make the tangled ends of her theory and practice blend

into one harmonious whole, — to prosecute her studies to much advantage.

During these first years she has the daily preparation of lessons, and the fixing and strengthening of knowledge only half gained, since it has not been tested. Her talents and accomplishments, graces of mind and soul, must all be burnished to their fullest brightness, that she may stand out before the children's eyes and hearts clad with every charm and endowed with all wisdom. But in the following years there is no apology for narrowness of thought or lack of development. She must look about her and see what other and wiser minds have done in this great vocation ; she must look abroad and cull from every source open to her the treasures of wisdom which are accessible to every earnest student.

No amount of money, cheap notoriety, or even true fame, could ever give the earnest training-teacher any pleasure if her pupils did not seem to be working devotedly, fearlessly, and generously for the good of the children under their care, and for the cause which they represent ; bearing themselves, in short, as if they were working with God, — as they are!

The idea is passing away that God can only be served on Sundays and in temples. The poor blind world often puts Him so far out of sight that He can scarcely be reached, but in looking too high for Him we turn

Faithfulness
to Simple
Duties.

our backs upon half the blessedness of life. We are just as likely to see Him in a child's eyes as in the stars! We must not be impatient, then, of all this studying of seemingly simple things; of doing simple duties; of watchfulness and painstaking; of patient dealing with sometimes ungrateful material; of only helping sometimes when we are anxious to take the reins of government and establish our own kingdoms. That power is greatest which is willing to lay itself aside, and even God sometimes hides himself under limitations. He rules best who serves best; the best assistant makes the best teacher. She who is faithful over the little things is the one who will dispense the great things wisely. She who makes the quiet corner in the kindergarten of somebody else; who has the happy children; who wins the smiling faces and willing hands; who has the best outward appearance of order, with the least show of fuss or discipline; who conquers through the arts of peace, rather than those of war, — she it is who will come nearest to the ideal kindergartner when she establishes her own field of labor.

The root must come before the blossom. At the root of all ease lies slow, profitless-seeming labor, as at the root of all grace lies strength, for "ease is the lovely result of forgotten toil."

All our thinking and doing, writing, studying, and teaching, now is, or appears to be, in little, dis-

jointed pieces, fragments, good enough in themselves ; but what we want and need is, to be “all of a piece,”—to get unity! Our study, reflection, and patient practice seem somewhat like gathering the tiny fragments together for a mosaic. By and by, as we place the disjointed little bits in their proper places, the pattern begins to grow ; one bit gives color to another ; one piece is the complement of the next, and together they make a beautiful whole, — all the more valuable that it was not made by a single stroke, but by a thousand delicate touches, each one of which was pressed in place with infinite forethought and patience.

There is apparently no end to the modifications and improvements necessary in the kindergarten in order to make our work keep pace with our growing ideals and our growing knowledge both of the child's nature and of the world's needs. Any but a strong soul might well be dismayed by the demands made upon the kindergartner of to-day. The musicians expect good singing, good music, good touch, and fair technical command of the piano. Literary workers demand good stories and good verses. The artists bear down upon us in a body and lecture us on color and form till we wonder at our past sins in this matter. Designers show us faults in our forms of symmetry. The sculptors declare that many of us are on the wrong track,

Mosaic-
making.

Demands
upon the
Modern Kin-
dergartner.

from their standpoint, and the Delsarte and physical culture people say that our systems of gesture in past years have been pathetic in their stupidities. The public school teachers do not worry us so much about these little matters, but merely request us to send them disciplined human beings who can read the primer at sight, and wrestle with numbers like infant Samsons. An elocutionist said the other day that she thought the lack of systematic tone-culture in the kindergarten a most flagrant weakness. "My dear young lady," a training-teacher said, "be patient, and give us a little time. We have ourselves in hand, and we are at present endeavoring to develop into human polyhedrons, with each side as geometrically perfect as all the others. We are striving to satisfy the artists, the sculptors, the musicians, the athletes, the literary workers, the ministers, the philanthropists, and the teachers, to say nothing of scientists, socialists, mental healers, and school boards. We endeavor to form ourselves successively on Froebel, Horace Mann, Demosthenes, St. Cecilia, Raphael, the Apollo Belvedere, and Job. (Job, by the way, is the only one among these ideals on whom we can form ourselves without money and without price; the rest demand an expensive apprenticeship, and kindergartners are always as poor as Job's own domestic fowl whereof we read in the Scriptures.)

The world is not quite patient enough with kin-

dergartners, but they set the example, perhaps, for they are not patient with themselves; although they want to grow into all these lovely possibilities so much that they take suggestions, for the most part, in a modest and receptive spirit.

Do not mind the discouragements that belong to growth. Expect to feel "growing pains," and do not be surprised if you have them.

Don't be offended if you are criticised. Don't be over-troubled if you have made technical mistakes. Don't be discouraged if you find that, in striving to keep abreast of the times, somebody accuses you of not being true to Froebel. Dr. Holmes says: "Every new real thought on every real subject knocks the wind out of somebody or other." It is much more important to be true to truth than it is to be true to Froebel, and that is what he would tell you were he alive to-day.

Shall we be discouraged that so much is demanded of us? Not a bit! We ought to be glad that we belong to a profession in which there is such an ocean of room at the top! We ought to be glad that the thing itself is so fine, and so true, and so alive, and that the fault is with us. Nothing is clearer than that all things are in all things, and that just according to the intensity and extension of our mental being we shall see the many in the one, and the one in the many.

Study principles more, even if you study details

a little less. Seek for the soul of Froebel's idea, and don't waste all your time in rattling the dry bones of technique, useful as they are. Do you know those "patent outsides" sent to country newspapers? They are made up in some metropolitan central office, a hundred just alike, and sent to the editors in small towns. A little local news is inserted in the middle, and there is your newspaper! Some groups of kindergartens remind one of these "patent outsides." They seem to have been shot, ready-made, into existence. Kindergartner, children, and squared tables might have been sent out of the same factory at the same instant, and the trail, not of the serpent exactly, but of the manufacturer, is over them all.

There was once a saint, a holy man of God, so runs an old legend, who taught and preached and worked among his little flock of human beings day by day, and tried to lead them in the paths of usefulness and duty.

A Legend
for the Kin-
dergartner.

And perhaps they did not understand him altogether, but yet they loved him and revered him.

And it came to pass that one night, as he lay in a deep sleep, the very innermost truth of God, hidden from him before, came to him in a dream, written on three bars of sunlight.

And the glow thereof was so bright that it

almost blinded him, for this is the nature of truth.

And when he awoke he began to write the precious message on a scroll of parchment, and he wrote for many days.

And it came to pass that when the message was written he called his people together and said unto them: "I am bidden by the Spirit to journey into a far country, but I shall not leave you helpless nor lacking teaching, for the very truth of God has come to me in a dream, written on three bars of sunlight, and, lo! I have transcribed it in this scroll of parchment. Live by it, I beseech you, and it will make you free."

And the holy man delivered the roll of parchment into the hands of the people and journeyed into a far country.

And it came to pass after many years that he returned to the place of his former labors. And as he neared the great open square in the centre of the village, he saw a high altar and the people prostrated on their faces before it.

And he was glad in his heart, saying: "Truly my people are worshiping the most high God." And as he neared the altar he saw the roll of parchment in the most holy place. But, alas! the great seals were still unbroken! For the people had been worshiping the parchment, lo! these many years, and had never broken the seals

to read the innermost truth that was written therein!

Just so, in our blindness, do we deal with the truth of many things that come to us on bars of sunlight. We give our worship to their outward forms and semblances, and neglect to look within for the spirit.

THE REPUBLIC OF CHILDHOOD

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BY

KATE DOUGLAS WIGGIN

AND

NORA ARCHIBALD SMITH.

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